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1912

# The SMART SET

*A Magazine of  
Cleverness*



IN THIS NUMBER

## Her Soul and Her Body

LOUISE CLOSSER HALE'S

Masterly Study of Sex and Character

San Francisco the Joyous

By GELETT BURGESS

And **30** Other Clever Stories, Sketches, Etc.



LONDON

JOHN ADAMS THAYER CORPORATION

452 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

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Vol. XXXVIII

SEPTEMBER, 1912

No. 1

# THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF  
CLEVERNESS

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# The October SMART SET A Foretaste

The Magazine of Cleverness

For Minds That Are Not Primitive

## The Next Number of THE SMART SET

might be called a Paris number, for the reason that so many of the stories and articles in it have to do with that most fascinating of cities. We did not deliberately set out to make a Paris number. This October number just happened to grow that way, and we assisted its natural bent a little, that's all.

### The Paris of the French

is an article by William Richard Hereford, whose long residence in "La Ville Lumière" has given him an intimate knowledge of the true nature of that city. With sympathy and insight he tears away the superficial mask that hides the real Paris from the eyes of the average foreign visitor. Mr. Hereford deals some hard knocks to the many American and other scribes who spend a few days floating on the froth of the boulevards and then proceed to indite articles on the unparalleled wickedness of Paris. Too long has the most fascinating city in the world been reviled and slandered. *Nunc fiat justitia.*

### At the Rigolo Ball

by Joseph Ernest, is a little gem of a story full of surprises and as French as the Bon Marché, the Boul' Mich', or a mauve silk petticoat. It is also a delightfully realistic picture of a phase of Paris café life with which the tourist does not often get a chance to become so intimately acquainted.

### The Complete Novelette

will be a romantic story of the American Colony in Paris, the action taking place during the big flood of 1910. It is called "A Sentimental Dragon" and its author is Nina Larrey Duryea, the well-known novelist whose scintillating book "The House of the Seven Gabblers" made such a hit last year. An American widow of the hustling, climbing variety, her refined and captivating daughter and a young Frenchman who holds an important Government position are the central figures. The story presents a fine picture of the best old-French family life, and there is the true ring of romance throughout. As in all of Nina Larrey Duryea's writings, the characters are very much alive, the situations are drawn with deft and delicious humor, and the dialogue is full of sparkling brilliants and epigrams that make one stop to read them a second time.

### The Smart Set of Paris

will be the subject of a contribution by André de Fouquier, who has often been called "the Ward McAllister of Paris." The article tells in an interesting way of the character and life of the social élite of the social capital of Europe.



## The October SMART SET. A Foretaste—Continued

### Paris Plays and Players

will be written up (or down, or around—we don't know which, yet—) by George Jean Nathan, who is at present in the French capital gorging himself with material for this article. We can safely prophesy some entertaining reading from his sprightly pen.

### L'homme Qui Sent L'or

that is, "the man who smelt of gold," is a little story in French touching on the fatuous credulity of men where gold is concerned.

### Other Clever Stories, Etc.

in the October number—contributions that have nothing to do with Paris—will be:

"Idols," by Donal H. Haines, a story in which a dramatic critic gets himself into an awkward predicament.

"The Blaze on the Mountain," by Elliott Flower, a rousing tale of heroism and love, and a splendid description of a forest fire;

"The Skirt," by R. E. MacAlarney, a dashing narrative in which a young woman detective proves herself "every inch a man" while remaining very much of a woman;

"Miss Philippa and the Dry Farmer," by Janet Prentiss, a delightfully whimsical little sketch in which science and sentiment come into conflict;

"Butter, Eggs and a Baroness," by W. J. Lampton, one of this well-known humorist's characteristic productions;

"At the Sign of the Silver Spoon," by Lucine Finch, an exceedingly droll dialogue that will surely tickle your funny-bone, particularly if you are married;

"Ibrahim Fadallah, Social Reformer," by Achmed Abdullah, a very short story that reads like a piece of the very best early Kipling;

"A Constant Lover," by St. John Hankin, a highly amusing little play, presenting the most unmitigated hedonist of a hero that we remember since Aristippus.

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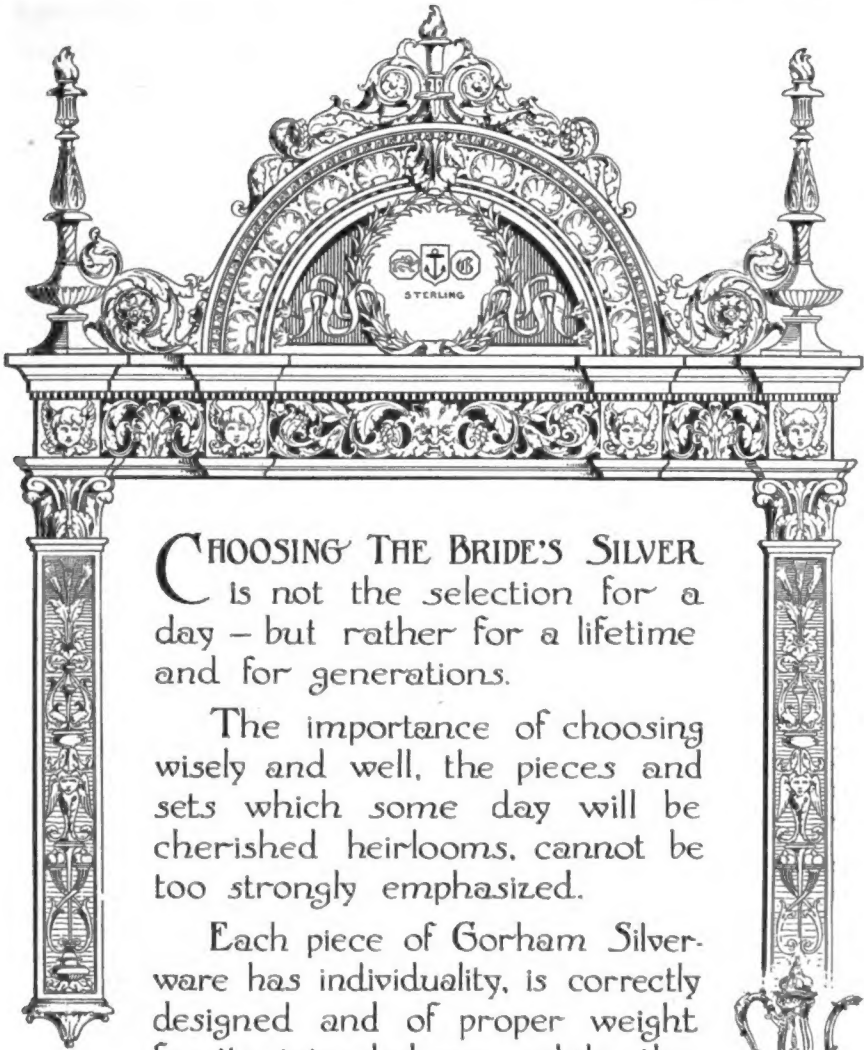
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Kisses are long forgotten of this twain,

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Touch of the hand, and feasting of the eyes,  
All tendrilled sweets that blossom at the door  
Of the stern doom, whose ecstasy is this -

The end of all small speech of word or kiss,  
And whose strange name is Love - and one name more

One is this twain past power of speech to tell,

Each lost in each, and each for ever found;  
Drained is the cup that holds both heaven and hell;  
Peace deep as peace of those divinely drowned  
In leagues of moonlit water wraps them round,  
And it is well with them - yea! it is well.

Richard Le Gallienne .



**"HEART'S HAVEN"**  
*From a picture made specially for The Smart Set Magazine by Rose Cecil O'Neill*



# THE SMART SET

*Its Prime Purpose is to Provide Lively Entertainment  
For Minds That Are Not Primitive*

## HER SOUL AND HER BODY

By Louise Closser Hale

I DIDN'T cry when I went away. At the last moment I thought I had forgotten my box of lunch. I didn't want to speak to them about it, for it would have been too late anyway, but I kept worrying all the time they were saying, "Good-bye, Missy; good-bye, Melissa Robinson." Everyone waited until the train pulled out, and finally it grew hard to think of anything to say.

I was to sit in the day coach until eight at night, and then I was to take the sleeper. I saved a dollar and a half that way. Every time we curved around a hill I could see the Pullman and the dining car on ahead. They were very handsome, and it gave me a pleasant feeling to have something rich to look forward to. I decided, then, that if I always have a bow of promise before me I shall be able to endure any present situation.

I'm sixteen, going on seventeen. So I've a great deal ahead of me, practically my whole life—from today on, which is February 2, 1893. February has always been an absorbing month for me. Mrs. Andrews says the things we want most we are sure to get. I expect some of the things I will get may surprise me, not knowing that I wanted them until they arrived. I planned until supper time.

My lunch was in my valise, after all. Everyone was eating out of shoe boxes, so I didn't mind—but I was glad I wasn't in the Pullman. I had some cold chicken left and I wanted to give it away, but I was ashamed. Besides, no one noticed me but a man in the seat across. He kept looking over and smiling. He had long, pointed shoes—out in the aisle—and he changed his diamond ring from his right to his left hand because it was on my side.

I was afraid, but I wasn't afraid of him. I turned away, and pressed my head against the window pane to look out into the darkening snow fields. I tried to find out things about myself. What do I fear when a man notices me? Not him, for I can run away. Myself? Perhaps it is; because the something in me that makes them stare is the something in me that makes me afraid. I don't like this part of me, and yet I was born with it just as I was born with ten toes. I don't believe I can any more run away from it than I can run away from my ten toes, either.

I grew a little nervous sitting alone in a car with a part of me that I can't get away from. There seemed to be a great deal of space about me. I had the wish that I could be hedged around somehow. "In the fold" kept coming

to my mind. I felt sorry for myself because I was an orphan and would have to earn my living.

I was glad when I could take my valise and go into the sleeper, as the man with the diamond ring was going to sit up. All the berths were ready and the porter took me to mine. I knew how to get into these beds, for once, when my father and mother were alive, we went all the way to Boston in the Pullman. I couldn't remember what they had done about giving the tip to the porter, though, whether it was at the beginning or the end of the trip. Mrs. Andrews—who has brought me up—heard that if you give him money the minute you start you get much better attention. All this week she has been collecting odd change for the porter, and she put it in a separate place in my purse. I decided to give it to him before I went to bed. And I did. There was twenty-eight cents. He seemed astonished when I poured it into his hand, and didn't even thank me.

I worried more over its being too little than over its being too much, although Mrs. Andrews said it was princely, and he shouldn't really receive anything. I expect I am poorer than he is. I've just enough money from what my folks left me for this two years' schooling. I must count every penny, Mrs. Andrews says.

It was afternoon when we reached Boston the next day, as we had been blocked by snow. I had had breakfast in the dining car, but that was all I had eaten, and I was hungry. People were being met by people at the depot, and I thought for a moment I was going to be met, too, for a tall, fair man was walking up and down the platform eyeing all of us. He looked like the photograph I've seen of Everett's friend to whom I have the letter. Everett is rather an admirer of mine at home. But of course I didn't speak, for he was the kind of man who wouldn't encourage such a thing unless he knew you. Only it would have been pleasant to have been met.

I walked out of the station by myself. I remembered what Jennie Daly wrote.

She is a senior at the school where I am going, and knows Boston life thoroughly. I refused to listen to the hack drivers on the station side of the street who charge fifty cents, but went across to the herdies, and took one as far as the bridge on Columbus Avenue. "Stop at the bridge," I said firmly. I wanted him to think I understood Boston. He groaned horribly, for it is only a quarter to that point, and fifty cents to go farther. I gave him a ten-cent tip, though, which surprised him.

The boarding house is just a few steps beyond this bridge, and yet I came very near not reaching it. I mean it seemed that way for a moment. The trains were rushing under the roadway—for it is really a viaduct—and as I was crossing over, one of them came thundering along in the darkness under me, and something that was a part of myself screamed: "Throw yourself over!"

It was perfectly natural for the moment. I believe I could have done it as easily as not. But it was only for that instant. Life welled up around me, so sweet and beautiful, and I crossed the bridge.

## II

JENNIE DALY doesn't live in my boarding house, but she takes her meals there. You go in by the basement door to the dining room. There is a sign in the window:

21 Meal Tickets: Ladies \$3.50, Gents \$4.00.

Miss Croakes sits at a sort of desk in the hall and punches out the meals. She wears a white knitted cape over her shoulders. It was washed once and is pulled into holes. She is little, and seems to make the most of it, for I think she would rather be young than not. Her hair is a frizzed red, and her cheeks stick out from her wrinkles in lumps. She paints these lumps, and they look like winter apples in ugly surroundings. She is hard worked, and so is her mother, an old lady all gray, who stays at the dumb waiter calling down to the cook in a sort of whispered rage.

When I entered the room they were having supper—dinner, I should say. I went in and sat with Jennie and her roommate, whose name is Theodora King. Jennie is tall and thin. She must have looked like an old maid before she was born. Her red flannels show at the wrist, but you feel at once that it would not be the thing to tell her. I would call her stiff, but she calls it repose.

You can't say the same of Theodora. Her hair and eyes are wild, and she is never still a minute. Some young students from the Technology sit next to us; I would think them very stylish at home. They make fun of the food with Theodora.

Mrs. Croakes has two houses. My room is not in the one that has the dining room and the parlor. It's next door, but there is only a railing a foot high separating the two stoops, and one can climb over, if it's not too icy, without much trouble. I am sorry not to be in the house with the parlor, for if Everett's friend calls it will be awkward getting over in my pale blue cashmere. Jennie's house has no parlor at all. She says she has grown accustomed to doing without. I wonder if we can grow used to anything in time?

My room is on the first floor because there isn't any cheaper one vacant. You get an idea that it is going to be warm when you enter, then you find it rather clammy after a little while. The halls aren't heated at all, and such dreary people go in and out—all, that is, but the young South American student who has the room back of me. He plays on the guitar, and his friends come in to sing from the operas that are in town. The girls say Miss Croakes is in love with him. To be sure, he gets a great deal of meat, and she always brightens up when he enters, and hurriedly slips off the crocheted shawl—for she wears a plaid silk waist underneath. At the moment she looks almost pretty. When love has that power, why do we laugh at it? I don't. I'm as scared as I can be of it. But I shall work hard, and it may not come my way.

Jennie has pointed out to me that

if we do without our luncheon at Mrs. Croakes's, which amounts to about seventeen cents, we can get a cup of bouillon on the way home for five cents, and make two weeks' meal tickets answer for three. She knows all the drug stores where they serve soda crackers free, and she says when the fair begins at Mechanics Hall one can easily get a whole lunch out of the pure food samples.

Jennie appears to like me, but when I hold onto her she shakes me off. However, she says her present roommate, Theodora, has too broad views of life to suit her; and, more than that, Theodora wants to room with Gracia just as soon as the young man Gracia is going to marry leaves for Florida. She is the girl who goes out to stay with her people almost every night, so it gives Theodora a chance to be alone, although why she has to wait until the young man goes to Florida is more than I can understand. But that doesn't make any difference to me. If I can room with Jennie so that my expenses will be lessened I shall ask no questions. I wonder if Jennie ever takes off her red flannels?

This has been a good day. It was pleasant under foot and I could walk both ways; also, owing to being full of thoughts, I didn't miss my luncheon—very much. My instructor of dancing is a foreigner, very alive; and something goes out from ourselves, each to the other, a sort of throb of understanding, when we meet. Today I stayed late to practise some steps with her.

"You are studying to teach also?" she asked me.

"Like the others," I told her.

"That will be a waste; you would make a fine dancer. Specialize in that, and some day you will make a name for yourself."

I looked at her and stammered: "On the stage?"

"Surely; we are arriving at the age of dancing. You have everything on your side: grace, youth, good looks and that quality which makes men turn around to see if you are looking, too."

"But I am not!" I cried.

"Then you have a good head—another quality much needed for the theater."

"But not a dancer on the stage," I again protested.

"Where else?" she smiled. She was being kind, she thought.

I suddenly felt very small, and in the center of a great wind-swept space with thousands of eyes upon me. I could see in contrast a small cell with prison bars, and they were welcome. For the moment I envied nuns who were cloistered and need exercise no strength of their own to be so shut in.

"I shall never be a public dancer," I cried hotly.

"Who are you to flout the talent that is given you?"

I feared that I was going to lose her interest and sympathy. "But I'll study hard, and stick to dancing, and I'll create beautiful figures for happy girls to learn in school."

She put kind hands on my shoulders. "Why don't you want to let the world see you?"

"I'm afraid," I confessed, "of the lights, the music, the—I don't know what."

She was silent, looking out of the window down into Tremont Street. The cars were clanging, the snow shovelers shouting; the city way was blocked with life, but fighting to get on. After a little intent listening the noise resolved itself into one universal sound, and that sound into a regular beat which kept time with my heart. I spoke of it.

"All life has rhythm," she answered, "just as your soul and body have. Don't think you can escape from the beat of your pulses by crawling into a corner."

### III

COLUMBUS AVENUE is not so impressive when one becomes accustomed to rows of houses all over a city. It is like the rooms at Mrs. Croakes's. At first one thinks, "This is very handsome;" and then one sees that nothing matches, and the yellow oak furniture is very cheap, and squeaks.

People are like that; we are all disappointments to each other. I no longer greatly value Mrs. Croakes, and she dislikes me; also the young South American hates me and Miss Croakes now hates the South American. And I am to blame for it all—or perhaps it is the ugly furniture which sends me over to Jennie to study every time she asks me. That brings me home late, and the last time I came back after nine I heard a voice—only it was a woman talking in the room of the South American. Not that that made any difference, for I was glad he had gone, and that someone with whom I might be friendly had taken his place.

I went over to Mrs. Croakes's parlor to pay my weekly bill. Mrs. Croakes didn't let me in the room at first. There was a slamming sound, and when Miss Croakes opened the door a crack, the sofa was being pushed back where I had always seen it. I believe that the sofa is their bed at night. I don't suppose there is a real parlor in this whole boarding house district.

As I went out I told them that I was glad a lady had taken the room back of me; and then, almost before I had finished, Mrs. Croakes said to her daughter: "Go over there and see to it." But Miss Croakes was already over there. She went into my room and crouched down with her ear against the connecting door. The girl spoke again—but the South American's voice answered her. I had made an error. I had told on someone. I was very miserable, but I was not as unhappy as the landlady's daughter. When she rose the red apples on her cheeks stuck out so far from her face that I could have picked them.

"The dirty dog!" she said. "He'll go tomorrow." She looked sick, and I remembered that she loved the young man. "And after all that meat!" she added as she left.

Toward morning the girl passed my door going out. She wore a rusty silk petticoat. The South American went into the hallway with her. He told her he was expecting a cheque from home.



## IV

I HAVE met Everett's friend. He has a name, of course. It is Van Wyck Ruyme, and the last is pronounced like "Rhine."

He was waiting in the parlor when I came home from school late, so I didn't have time to put on my pale blue cashmere. I thought of it all the time I was climbing the railing between the stoops. He was the man I had seen at the station, and that is the first thing I said to him. He replied that Everett had wired for him to try to meet me—that I would wear a bobbing rose in my hat. I told him that was my best hat, and naturally was in my trunk. He said: "Of course, naturally."

All this time we were standing in the center of the room, but I knew in a minute I must ask him to sit down. Both Mrs. Croakes and her daughter were present and they didn't move. I realized that it was truly the bedroom and that I had no right there.

After a dreadful pause Mr. Ruyme said: "Do we go over to your rooms?" I looked at Mrs. Croakes. I was expecting her to protest, but she went on darning tablecloths. She didn't care. Nobody cared. Anyway, I was glad he thought I had "rooms." The bed folds up.

We climbed across. Nothing seemed to disconcert him, but then he is a Bohemian. He lives in Cambridge now because he wants to be near ("but not too near") an aged aunt who is rich and thinks of dying.

He says things in a sort of offhand way—nothing seems of much consequence. I tried to act that way, too, since it must be the correct thing, but I grew rather excited when he told me that he had lived in Paris. I have never known anyone but Lucy Beck who has ever been to Paris.

"Do you like French?" I asked, wishing to appear cultured. He answered me in that tongue, so I don't know yet whether he likes French or not.

I felt countrified, but I kept on admiring him. He is all the things you read about. He is very good-looking—

no, he is not. There is a coarseness about him, but that must be what I want. Twice, as I looked at him, the something that told me to throw myself over the bridge said: "He is a brute." Then I looked again and saw how well he carried himself, and how easily his clothes hung, without any drummer affectations, and how softly kind he was when he was kind at all; and that seemed a silly thing to pop into my head. His eyes are tired and hidden by heavy lids; his brow and nose are splendid. He wears a mustache to hide his mouth. At least I suppose that is the reason, for it is rather heavier than those of the men one sees on Beacon Street. His lips are full and red and his teeth large and heavy. I see that this is no description of him, but he is big and strong and polished and all of the things I am not, so of course I like him. He always followed up something that made me unhappy by something that made me feel I was very important. I suppose that is what Theodora would call his "line of attack."

"You are an awfully little bit of a girl for such a big room," he said as he got up to go. I explained that I was to have a smaller and cheaper one just as soon as it was empty—that they were putting out a lady this week. Then he laughed a great deal for the first time.

"And if you stay on absorbing all this," he continued rather oracularly, "what will Everett say when he marries you?"

Marrying Everett seemed very absurd after my three weeks here—although Mrs. Andrews had said that it would be the solution of everything. He has a good position in his father's store at home, and his one year at Harvard hasn't interfered with his business development at all. He had met Mr. Ruyme in Cambridge by chance, and had asked his father to look after some interests of his distinguished acquaintance near New Washington. So Mr. Ruyme was quite nice to Everett, who admired him in return, and wanted me to meet what he called a real man of the world.

I replied that I had no thought of

marrying Everett. He put out his hand.

"Right-o! We'll have some good times, then, little Miss Robinson." And he went out the door without saying good-bye. It was like a play.

## V

I THOUGHT the good times would begin the next day, but three weeks went by before I saw him again.

I had had a boil on my shoulder and it had almost healed. Having the boil was very dismal. I bought a little alcohol stove and made poultices for it. I didn't have a doctor, so it had to take care of itself.

The day after the boil was better I moved upstairs into a small hall-room. The lady who had occupied it had said it was "not true," and had refused to leave at first. I heard her saying it all down the hall to Miss Croakes. So, as she had paid her rent in advance, she insisted upon living it out. Miss Croakes said there is always something the matter with them when they want to pay in advance, and if she "hadn't 'a' needed the money—"

It is a very little room, indeed, heated by the hall, which means that it isn't heated at all. "How warm it is!" Miss Croakes always says when she sees me studying with my door open and my coat over my shoulders. I have to go into the bathroom to practise my dance steps, and then I strike the tub.

I didn't tell anyone, but the very first night I could hear a woman moaning in the big room next to mine. Of late when something happens I remind myself that this is none of my affair. But she moaned the next night, and then I asked the chambermaid. She said someone was awful sick there, and Miss Croakes was that cross about it.

The third day I heard the woman say that they had brought her no food. I stood up then with my ear to the door and boldly listened. The chambermaid said she was sorry and would go herself, and after she had gone downstairs I just went in to see what I could do.

The woman's face was very white, and the rings around her eyes looked like the kind the clowns paint on. Her nightgown was covered with cheap lace, but the ribbons were not run in, and it was soiled. I had carried in my bottle of beef, wine and iron tonic by way of introducing myself. I wanted to give her some, but she wrung her hands feebly and cried. I felt foolish, and saw that she didn't need me nor want me. She didn't notice when I went out.

No one came to see her but the doctor. He was a stumpy, dirty-looking man with an unkempt beard, and puffy about the eyes. He has a hospital near here, the chambermaid said. Late that night, as I was lying with my transom open to get a circulation of air, I heard Mrs. Croakes talking to him.

She said his patient must go; that he had no right to bring her into a decent house which had kept its good name and which wouldn't have indiscreet women dying in it. She threatened to make trouble for him.

The next day, as I was coming home, he and a man were helping the girl down the steps into a carriage. Her face was drawn with pain, but she kept smiling up at the man. They had not dressed her completely, although she had managed to tie a bit of bright ribbon around her throat.

Now Mrs. Croakes is disinfecting the room with an ill smelling insecticide, and soon someone else will be moving in. I looked over my few dresses, planning what I should wear if I saw Mr. Ruyme more than once—if I ever saw him again, I should say. I was so hungry for something pleasant to happen that I found myself envying the sick woman whom I had seen looking up into the face of the man. My dresses are like her bright ribbon, but I have no one to wear them for.

## VI

A FEW days afterward Jennie and I took a long walk up Beacon Street. Whenever I cross the viaduct leading over to the Back Bay district I seem to

breathe purer air. Jennie says the air is just as good in Columbus Avenue if not better, but that isn't what I mean. We admired the early spring flowers in some of the windows. The plate glass is so clear that we can see grate fires in the rear room—it is very homelike. All of the women drag their dresses, and all the men wear buttonhole bouquets. A violet dropped from one man's bunch, and I hid it in my purse quickly. I was afraid he might see me and laugh. I had never had a violet in February before.

It was a good day for me, though a shabby one. In the first place, I arranged definitely to go to Jennie's the following week; and in the second place, which is really the first, but not in order; Mr. Ruyme called shortly after I reached home. It was such luck, for I could just as easily have missed him. One so often misses what one wants very much by walking a block too far.

I felt unhappy about the hall bedroom but I explained that I was leaving shortly. He had to sit on the bed, which is a divan—sort of. I expected him to tell me why it had been three weeks since I had seen him, but he didn't. He never says what I think he is going to, and what I had planned to say myself I can never get in.

But that isn't all of the day—in the evening we went to the theater! The seats were on the main floor, too. He said he was dining with some friends, but he would call for me at eight, and not to dress.

It was an opera. There is music that one never forgets, and it isn't at all on account of the beauty of it, but on account of the person you are with. The prima donna sang a song about a nightingale that was so lovely I wanted to die for someone. I looked at Mr. Ruyme in the darkness. His eyelids were heavy and tired, but his eyes were charming. They didn't get black at night as most eyes do, but stayed a pale bored gray. He smiled back at me out of the darkness—just an eye smile—and pressed my arm with his fingers.

When the opera was over we went through a narrow street full of people

rushing to trains. The snow was deep and the carriages were all mixed up. No one drives in surreys here—they all use hacks.

I was wondering if anything pleasanter could happen, when Mr. Ruyme said: "Now shall we go to a restaurant and have a respectable and dull time eating with a few hundred others, or shall we take a private room and have a nice little supper by ourselves—which?"

I didn't answer.

"Well, Miss. Melissa Robinson, which?"

"I shall have to walk along for a little while and think it over," I replied.

"It's not as important as that."

"Is it wrong to eat in a private room?"

"Not wrong, but unconventional."

"Something tells me that it is wrong."

"Oh, very well, if you know more about it than I do."

He looked bored and I had a spasm of fear. "I suppose a student doesn't have to be conventional, does she?" I asked.

He cleared up. "That's just it," he approved.

I felt flushed with the excitement of becoming a Bohemian. We went into a nice-looking hotel. The big doors closed behind us with a boom. Everything was very decorous, and the room was so plain that I could have cried—just a little round table and a few chairs, with a picture on the wall of hounds dragging down a doe.

I had a hard time with the food. Mr. Ruyme spoke French to the waiter so I didn't know what we were going to have, but it was only roasted oysters after all, and a "little bottle" as he called it. It sparkled and was a lovely yellow. I thought it was champagne, which I had never seen.

I tasted the oysters, but I am not accustomed to highly seasoned cooking and the pepper burned me terribly. I seized the long-stemmed bubbling glass and hastily drank from it. The fumes went right into my nose. Tears streamed from my eyes. The waiter handed me a glass of water. Mr. Ruyme said to eat a little bread. He was awfully kind. I was hot to my

toes with shame. "Perhaps you don't like wine," he said.

I was disappointed. "Oh, is this wine?" I choked out. "I thought it was champagne."

The waiter went out quickly. He always knocked twice before he came in, until Mr. Ruyme spoke to him very sharply in French, and after that he came in without knocking.

As soon as I had learned to sip the wine slowly it didn't bother me much, but all of a sudden I grew a little dizzy, and I didn't touch any more. I hummed the nightingale song from the opera. Mr. Ruyme said the idea was from an old story in the "Decameron"; that he would show me the volume when I came out to see his "comfy rooms"—that is, the outside of it. "You haven't read the 'Decameron,' have you?" he asked.

I told him I had never seen a copy, but I had heard of it. Lucy Beck's brother had the book in his washstand drawer until his mother found it. To tell the truth, I was surprised that Mr. Ruyme would speak of a book one must hide in the washstand drawer.

"Don't read it," he quite begged me. "Keep wonderful—just as you are."

He put his hand over mine as it rested on the table. I drew it away with the greatest effort, not that he was preventing me, but that something in me was wanting it to stay there. A wave of despair swept over me—I must be always fighting the happiest part of me, and even after I fight it generally wins. Tears came into my eyes. It was, somehow, very easy to cry.

"What's the matter?" he coaxed.

"I can't stay just as I am—no one can; I must go on and learn life, and all its ways."

"Then let me be one of your teachers." He was very gentle. "Don't let knowledge come to you unbeautifully."

I was quite grateful, and felt sheltered all the way home. "In the fold" came to my mind again.

## VII

It is so splendid at Jennie's—my home now. The house is small, and

the minute the front door is opened the warmth comes out to greet you. Mrs. Short emerges from her sitting room as we go in and says: "Well, young ladies, what did you learn today?"

She is fat and comfortable-looking, with white hair which she said turned so from fright, and eyes of a snappy brown. She wears clean print wrappers always. If the edges get dirty she scolds, because then she says the house is dirty. One has the feeling that she is very executive. I like her, but I shouldn't like to displease her or not pay my rent.

Mrs. Short has all women in her house—except Jimmy. He is a "coach," and an old friend of the family, I am told. He takes his meals with her down in the clean kitchen. Sarah is the cook, but Mrs. Short does up the rooms herself.

Our room is the first flight front. The bed folds up and has a beveled mirror in it. There is a screen around the washstand, and a long, low dresser with gas jets on either side. We don't have to use the cold, hard light of the chandelier in the center. There is a soft couch with a roll at one end, and a big woolly chair is in the bow window. One of the arms of the chair is quite smashed down from other lodgers in days gone by having sat on it. I suppose there was someone in the chair, too. At times I sit on the arm also, and pretend I am talking to a person inside. My arm is over the back. It is very intimate.

I watch from the window all the time when I am not studying. At dusk it is beautiful if I look up-toward Dartmouth Street. Men and women are slipping in and out of my vision, not knowing that I am using them to make a series of street pictures; rich students have their little dogs out, and there is a great deal of striking of matches to light their pipes. The blue sulphur spurts up and is gone. The lamplighter hurries along, and the snow becomes yellow in circles around the lamp post instead of purple. Then my event follows! I call it *my* event because Jennie sees nothing in it, and I see so



much. First the glass ball of many colors which surmounts the pole in front of the gaudy drug store begins to revolve, and as it does so, the lights creep into it one by one. When it is all ablaze it goes faster and faster, throwing the rich shades prodigally about, just like the world revolving on its axis, and scattering lovely color into our lives.

A ruby beam strikes my breast every night. I call it Mr. Ruyne.

### VIII

I HAVE something to say, but it is going to be difficult. I must be very honest and tell it straight. There is no use lying to myself.

The day began with excitement. On Fridays at the school we have a recital, and the public is invited. Strange kinds of old ladies come—the ones we always see at church fairs when there is no admission charged.

Yesterday was my first appearance. As I waited for my turn I wondered why I should be afraid to get up before such ordinary creatures when I didn't fear to sit among them. There was only a difference of a few feet between our little stage in the lecture room and the main floor where I was so comfortable, yet it was all the difference between terror and tranquillity.

I began to pray to God to have something happen to prevent my going on. I didn't care if it was an earthquake and hundreds of people were killed. As usual, He paid no attention to me. When my name was called I said to myself: "Be eccentric—run!" But all the time I was walking toward the stage.

First I recited a verse, and then the accompanist played on the piano and I danced. I was Pan and a young shepherdess. While I was repeating the first verse I was thinking of Mr. Ruyne. It was very strange how I could do both things at once, and when I began to dance I concentrated on him. I was sure he would help me if God would not.

Perhaps I would have been even worse without his help. Once I was so full

of him that I made a misstep. I was terribly frightened, and looked right out at the audience to see if they had noticed. They must have, for when I looked they laughed and applauded sympathetically. Someone said: "She's such a baby!"

I went on and my hair fell down, making them laugh again. I swung to his name: "One-two-three, I-love-you; one-two-three, help-me-through; one-two-three, Van-Van-Van; one-two-three, yes-you-can."

I caught a glimpse of the ballet mistress, and she wasn't a bit pleased, even though the others liked me. I knew she was right—I didn't like myself—but it annoyed me that I didn't deceive her. It occurred to me that I could cover up my bad dancing very successfully since the audience didn't seem to mind just my smiling at them and shaking my hair around my eyes.

They were still applauding when I left the room. An attendant had said someone wanted to see me in the hall, and forgetting all about my hair in my excitement I walked out. Mr. Ruyne was there. He stared at me. "You beauty!" he whispered.

He hadn't seen me dance, though. He had come up just for a lark, and to ask me to lunch with him. When the girls streamed out I pretended to talk with him quite easily, as though he belonged to me. Once I put my fingers on his coat sleeve, but he was very formal. "Careful, little girl," he murmured. He always makes me the offender, somehow or other.

When we reached the street he hesitated a moment, and then turned me toward the Gardens. I swayed whichever way he touched my arm, just as music sways me in the dance. It was delightful.

"Where shall we go?" he asked.

I didn't care. "I've had my hour; now you have yours," I answered.

Then we took the red Cambridge car and rode a long time. He knew some of the students who were going out, too. Had Mr. Ruyne been anyone else but himself, I would have thought he was rather lordly toward me before them,

just as I had tried to be toward him before the girls.

The boys would have attracted me enormously six weeks ago, and they would set New Washington afire still, but now they seemed to be too young to bother with. One of them dropped his books, and then his spectacles, and then his books again as he was picking up his glasses. I laughed out loud at that, and was rather apologetic afterward.

"I don't ever seem to grow up," I said to Mr. Ruyme.

"How old are you?"

"I'm almost seventeen."

"And you expect to be a teacher of calisthenics and such arts in a private school?"

"I'm going to be."

"You'll never get a job. All those other students at your place are a great deal older. Why didn't you wait?" He seemed almost irritable.

"I couldn't wait; my money would have been all used up. I'm the youngest there, I admit, but you must remember I shall have another year. Then I'll be eighteen when I finish."

"Bully! We'll have all next winter together, and we shall be as close as close—sha'n't we, Miss Melissa Robinson?"

I thought I should suffocate with happiness. I had been wondering what if the aunt died.

The luncheon was at Mr. Ruyme's rooms. I didn't know it until we got there, and then, right at the door, I realized. I looked at him. "It's all right, I suppose?" I was afraid to say it, yet I had to.

He grew very cold and bored. "I'm taking you," he replied.

I pretended I was in terror of his Mrs. Croakes. I made it a sort of mock terror.

"Go right upstairs," he answered, "and pay no attention to anyone."

The rooms were lovely—a grate fire burning, books around the walls and chairs made to sit in. A piano was in one corner, covered with a beautiful piece of embroidery. It was really an old coat. On the top were solid silver

picture frames containing the most beautiful women I have ever seen in my life. Some were inscribed to "Van" or "Vanny," and other coldly correct ones were simply to "Mr. Ruyme, in memory of a pleasant evening."

I had on a dark blue sailor suit open at the throat, an old ulster over it, and, thank heaven, my hat with the bobbing rose. But in spite of it, I realized that the competition was too strong. I simply buried my face in the embroidered coat and hid there—a foolish ostrich—praying never to come out.

Mr. Ruyme, who knows all that I think, came over and pulled me away. "You dear silly," he said, seesawing me along and getting me out of my coat, "don't you ever look in the mirror?"

I kept up a despairing little wail that made him laugh. It was all so delicious that as soon as I was out of my wraps I ran to the piano and buried my face again. But this time he said: "No, no, I'm not going to pull you out of that pose again."

Then I was embarrassed.

A Japanese servant laid a piece of lace and linen upon the center table and put down a quaint silver service. I could hardly talk for staring at him at first. He was very polite, and when he called me "Missy" I was obliged to tuck a smile into my napkin.

"Why?" queried Mr. Ruyme. We had started the lunch and he was opposite.

I told him, when the Japanese went out of the room, that, while Melissa is my real name, they all say "Missy" at home. So the polite servant was really calling me by my first name.

"Missy!" repeated Mr. Ruyme. "I should like to say it very often. How would you like the sound of 'Van'?"

It was quite natural for him to call me "Missy," but it seemed impossible for me ever to call him "Van," although when you know a young man six weeks in New Washington it is considered affected to do anything else.

He smiled every time I tried. "You'll do better some day," he said. I trembled a little, but I liked the possibility.

It was a wonderful luncheon, although I don't remember what we had to eat.

Once, when I dropped my napkin, he came over to my side and picked it up himself, closing my fingers over the damask as one treats a baby, and kissing them as he did so. I had never had my hand kissed before.

I didn't feel uneasy about this occurrence, for queens are always receiving such courtesies. But if it makes them sick with happiness as it did me, they must be worn out with joy. I couldn't keep my feet still, and three times I struck Mr. Ruyne, as the table was little. The first time he asked my pardon; the second he said: "Why, Missy, how naughty!" which made me flush as I laughed. But the last time he caught the offender between his two feet, and held it so.

There wasn't a break in his voice as he continued the story he was telling. But I could neither speak nor eat. I was afraid the Japanese could hear me breathing. Twice he offered me fruit, but I could only hang my head and shake it.

Mr. Ruyne leaned across the table. "Say 'Please, Van,'" he teased.

I shook my head again—I couldn't answer. A terrible thing happened: two tears fell out of my eyes into my fruit plate as I bent over. I didn't feel like crying, either.

Mr. Ruyne got up from his place and began pulling his chair around to my side. "This is dreadful," he said. "She weeps for food. Go for the coffee, Yogo."

The servant went into the little kitchen, and Mr. Ruyne fed me bit by bit. I could smile again, but I had to surmount a catch in my breast. Laughter seemed to be a sort of temporary thing—to keep off, for a little while longer, something more serious that was bound to follow.

Mr. Ruyne said: "Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and I'll give you something to make you wise," as he popped each grape into my mouth. The fourth time I opened my eyes suddenly, for I knew that he was about to kiss me. I must have caught the aroma of cigarette smoke and the peculiar perfume of his hair tonic. I pushed back my chair.

"Please, Van," I implored, quite unconsciously.

"Van"! At last! Well, that's something," was his only comment.

The servant came in and put the little coffee tray down before me; Mr. Ruyne went to the piano and began playing from the opera that I had heard with him. I was thinking clearly enough now. "He's going to try to kiss you again, and you mustn't let him. He doesn't respect you, and you have been brought up to believe that respect is everything on earth. It's all your fault, too. You shouldn't have gone into that private room with him—you knew it. You shouldn't have come here—you knew it. You'll have to have an ugly scene, but you must get out. Don't carry that coffee cup over to him. Get out."

That was what was being said to me. What I did was to pour out the coffee and carry it over to him. I put the cup down by the music rack, and stood beside him humming the song as he played.

The air was so full of the sound of "leave, leave," that Mr. Ruyne must have heard it. But he's not the man to notice warnings that will spoil his happiness. He wouldn't suffer, either, by not heeding them. Since I'm not an aristocrat, I wished I had been born in the gutter and didn't know right from wrong.

He played on with the left hand and with the right lifted the cup to his lips. We could see the Japanese from over the music rack.

"That is all, Yogo, thank you," said his master. "I'll ring."

"Go when the man goes," tortured my mentor. I didn't move.

He took another sip of coffee, then circled his arm around my waist and for an instant drew me to him. I swung away from him. "I'll have to leave," I said. My voice was strange in my ears. I had to clear my throat.

"All right," he answered, drifting into another melody. "Your hat's in on my bed."

I walked away a little and looked over my shoulder. I didn't know whether to tell him I'd had a nice time or not. His eyes were grayer than ever, and cold, like spring water. His face was indiffer-

ent. So it would end unbeautifully, after all! I should be a disappointment to him, something ungraceful—to forget as soon as possible. And as for me—one side of me would be only moderately happy, for that is the side which never gets much joy out of anything, and the other side would be starved and miserable. Where was the justice in that?

I stopped at the fire to warm my hands. The music ended. He crossed the room to me as I stood with my hands stuck out stiffly. He put one hand on my shoulder. "Don't you like my little home, Missy?" he said very quietly.

I didn't move and I couldn't speak. He slipped his arm about my neck. My head came right under his chin. We watched the fire. I knew that I must say something. I thought if I were very crafty that I could end it beautifully, and our friendship would always be a gentle memory. I cleared my throat.

"I love your little home—too much. When we love things we must run away from them."

"Why?" he asked.

Why, indeed? And I had thought it was clever. I had no answer.

"No love is wasted," his gentle voice continued. "The experience of it, even if it brings pain, enriches a life. It gives you knowledge, and knowledge is what we must in duty seek."

The half of me that had carried the coffee and stayed by the piano and stopped to warm its hands seized upon this. "You don't want to be ignorant, do you?" it urged.

The side that had done the moralizing tried to be heard again. At no time was it the accomplished side, and its vocabulary was meagre. "Go, go," was its only cry.

Once again I temporized. I would go, but beautifully. "I have always thought it would be best to die when one is very happy. That is the reason that I want to go now—for fear I may become *less* happy."

He shrugged me against him. I didn't slip away this time. "Please God, I shall *always* keep you happy," was his reply.

He left me and went to the little kitchen. "Yogo, if anyone calls say

that I am out. As for dinner—" The door closed upon him.

I was alone. I could see my things lying on the bed in the room beyond. Now I could leave and it would not be ugly. It was all shaped gracefully. He would find me gone, and our last words had been confessions of love. He would never see me again. I could be out before he entered.

I drove myself into the bedroom and gathered up my things. My feet were heavy and my heart was sick, but I stumbled in. I discovered a door that must lead directly from this room into the hall. In that way my chances were still less of meeting him. Still less! I was chill with horror. Then it would be true—I shouldn't ever see him again! I was really bringing this about! If I went by the bedroom I might never see him again. And if by the sitting room? The blood pumped through me. It was like a laugh. If by the living room—perhaps—I might see him once again. I went into the living room with my wraps huddled in my arms.

Van Ruyn came through the door of the little kitchen and saw me.

"Going?" he said shortly.

I dropped the coat and hat upon the floor.

"Don't be cruel," I whispered.

He came toward me—and toward me. I stretched out my arms, fingers extended, to keep him back. When he reached them he crumpled them up and came on. As his mouth was over mine I threw back my head to avoid him. His lips rested on the hollow in my throat.

Then he helped me on with my things for I was trembling, and at the door I kissed him.

## IX

DEAR MR. RUYNE:

You said to me on Friday in your home that it was part of one's development to love and to be loved, and I agreed with you because it was so sweet to have you kiss me, and—finally—to kiss you in return. It fills out the day, doesn't it? But that is the trouble: it fills it out and fills it up, and there is no room left for anything else. I don't seem to be able to do things by halves. I can't think of my duties—of calis-



thenics or of the laws of reading. I forget "the eye precedes the gesture, and locates it," and all the other rules of Delsarte. There is only you and the crackling fire and the exceeding comfort and softness of it all in my mind. This cannot be, for my tuition has cost me a great deal, and I shall have to be a teacher of elocution and calisthenics to earn my living when my money is gone. I have no relatives at all to turn to for assistance. Therefore I must give you up.

It can be done. Jennie has no one, and the women in this house go in and out, and all around the tired world alone, and if they can do without being loved, I can. Don't think I didn't have a nice time Friday. It doesn't seem real, but the flowers that you have sent prove to me that it isn't all a dream. Although the waking would be terrible, I wish you *were* a dream, and that I couldn't reach you just by stretching out my arms. But I am going to keep them close to my side, and work and work.

Good-bye,  
Missy.

Jennie had gone to spend the night with some people in Waltham, so I had the evening to write the letter. The first few attempts I made were prim, and then I wrote the way I felt, and decided that it was best. Every now and then I went to the window. It was snowing hard, and the ruby beams from the revolving globe fell very faintly upon my breast. The snowflakes froze them up before they reached me, and I felt very cold and out-in-the-night.

After all, I only did the other day what lots of the girls at home have done—cheaply and generally. They weren't always engaged, either. Not for one moment have I felt ashamed that I am not engaged to him. That is his affair. I can't ask him. And even with my eyes shut—dreaming of everything I want—I can't see him asking me to be his wife. It would be—how did he put something the other day?—it would be "out of the picture."

I was still determined to send the letter when I went down to Sarah's kitchen to get some hot water to wash out my handkerchiefs. It was late, but to my surprise Sarah was just coming in. She fastened the door, and I heard a tramping up the back steps into the alley.

"I didn't know you had a beau," I said to her.

She was quite indignant. "The Lord help the poor gyurl ut slaves in a kitchen

what hasn't. Love's the lubricatin' ile that keeps her jints a-workin' through the long day."

I seized the thought—I wanted to, of course. If I could let it oil my work—not clog it—perhaps—why not? The dim kitchen grew radiant. It is so splendid to find justification for what you want.

Sarah began setting the pancakes to raise for the morning. She was singing a little—I think she had had some beer. Her bonnet was on crooked, and the strings were covered with buckwheat flour, but she didn't care.

I pursued my point as she bent over the yellow bowl. "Anyway, all these women in the house get along without sweethearts, and they work—don't they?"

Sarah held the yellow bowl on either side, her head hanging over the batter, and shook silently. "Oh dearie, dearie, dear!" she repeated.

I felt bewildered. "Well, have they sweethearts?" I pressed.

"Is it them that's without the fellows," she finally cried—"them pretty birds? Let me tell you, fer yer own good, there's not a creature in the house, barring you young student ladies, but's sold her latchkey."

"But's done what?" I asked.

She lifted herself erect and looked at me with an injured air. "Go along with yer hot wather, Miss Melissa; I do be talkin'."

I didn't know what she meant, but I did know that, whatever those women were besides, they were certainly loved. I stood in the dark hall before opening my door. Love on all the floors! There was something grim about my trying to run away from it while running into it. And how silly it was for me to imagine that I would keep from seeing Van just by writing a letter—when I could always write another!

I tore up what I had prepared. Love and my work must make friends and be companions.

## X

LIFE swims along. Surely what I thought was wrong must be right, or I couldn't prosper. Everything fits in.

Flowers come to me in time to wear to school, fruit comes when we girls are having a party, and Van comes when I'm feeling lonely. Jennie has rarely met him. She goes to Waltham quite often now to see her friends. There is an instructor in the public schools there whom she likes very much. How lucky she is! The things she wants to do are always the things that are right for her to do. She passes among all kinds of people and remains full of character. I have so little of my own that I walk lame if I am behind someone on the street who is limping.

The teachers say I am impressionable. I know I love kindness, the beauty of soft nights, far-away music, the hollow of Van's arm, the cries of the world—even when it has pain in its whimper. Each day I feel like a miner who starts out with his pick to seek for new treasures. Only I always find it.

A young student from Mexico admires me very much. He makes love at the table with his mouth full, and it is rather terrible. Last Sunday morning he came to take me to the Cathedral, but I had forgotten my appointment with him and had gone to a Back Bay church with Jennie. He wore a purple shirt and tie, Mrs. Short said, and new yellow shoes, and he stood on the doorstep crying when she told him I had left the house.

I left when Mrs. Short repeated this; then she said: "Oh, yes, but what if Mr. Ruyné had done that to *you*?"

What if he had! Someone is always being hurt in the world, and it's awfully funny unless we're the hurt ones. I went upstairs silently. "Not that there's any danger," she called after me. She likes Van. He chaffs with her when she lets him in, and if Jennie is at home she invites him into her parlor and goes downstairs into the kitchen.

Her parlor is really Jimmy the trainer's bedroom. The couch lets out. She goes next door to sleep, which must be very uncomfortable. Every evening we can hear her say good night in a loud voice, and then the front door bangs.

One evening of each week our class goes out into the suburbs to do our

"*poses plastiques*" for some church entertainment. This is good practice for us and our expenses are always paid. Of late I have been going over to the Art Museum to study the Greek friezes, and it comes to me that if one followed the posturing faithfully, one ought to be able to originate a very beautiful dance that would be different from anything else. The ballet teacher is doubtful; she thinks one couldn't follow the ballet steps. All the same, when I am not thinking of Van I am planning that dance vaguely—way back in my head.

The museum is a great joy to me—if there were only more places to sit down! Standing is the tax the poor must pay in Boston. I love music and go to the symphonies on Friday afternoon, but always have to stand to get it! It is the same when we go to church. We stand until we hate our Lord. When the pews are no longer held for the regular owners we are shown into them. Some of the girls who have cold rooms attend service all day Sunday, and they are awfully tired by bedtime.

Although we go to the Back Bay, the Back Bay never comes to us. We would probably resent it if they did. We aren't charity students; we are from the country, but we are well born. They couldn't do anything but "improve conditions," and the conditions are sad, but not my affair. It would be much better if they built furnace fires. I have nothing to complain of. I don't see how any house could be cleaner or warmer or quieter than Mrs. Short's. One night a lodger who lives on the top floor came in crying as if her heart would break—and all the way up the first flight. But Mrs. Short came right out into the hall and said: "Mrs. Belstone, will you kindly shut up?" She is very particular.

When I told Van that he almost wept. Now that I know him better I learn a great deal from him. He doesn't laugh much, for he begs me to come to him with everything that bothers me. "I want to see you grow," he says.

I didn't ask him about what Sarah said, at first, because it had an ugly sound, and I wanted him to think my

house was a nice one. When I did speak I was on the little stool at the window looking out at the globe in the dusk, and he was smoking in the big woolly chair behind me. I leaned back ever so little that I might touch his knees. He pulled back the stool and tucked me in closer, and pinched my ears as he explained. My whole face was warm, but it is not so hard to say things in the dark.

What he said was even worse than I had thought, but, worse than that, he wasn't at all concerned over my being at Mrs. Short's. I didn't want to go away, for I am comfortable and living cheaply, but I would have gone, of course, had he advised me to.

But he didn't. He clasped his hands under my chin and drew my head against his knee, so that he could see into my face. I knew that he was going to say something to startle me, for he always watches me when he advances something new. For the moment he looked brutal, but one side of me liked it so much that the other side had nothing to say.

"Missy, dear," he answered at last, "your leaving wouldn't do any good. You draw these people—or they you—I don't know which. But this is where you belong."

I cried out, quick and loud. I thought immediately of Mrs. Short being severe with me if she heard, but I couldn't help it. I struggled to get to my feet. I was nearer running from him than I had ever been before and nearer wanting to run. He dragged me into his arms, and pulled me into the big chair with him.

"You're not on my side! You're not on my side!" was all I could say.

And, "Listen to me—listen to me," he kept repeating.

Then I heard his heart beating great thumps and I knew that my trying to go was meaning a lot to him. The joy of the knowledge was so overwhelming that I grew suddenly lax. I turned my face to his rough coat and cried.

He held me quietly, and didn't pat or paw. When there were no more sobs—no more long sighs—he talked a little about women—how all women reach for

love, but some attract it, and that very quality places them curiously all through life. Adventures are their portion. If I moved to the Back Bay even, I should soon find myself singularly surrounded. This mustn't frighten me, nor must I fight it. As a reward many women would envy me and all men desire me. "Now I've been fool enough to show you your power," was the way he ended.

## XI

Now that I know about myself—now that this strange half of me which I have always feared is really a gift, and something that other people would like to have, I must no longer regard the quality as an intrusion on my welfare but rather as my welfare.

Nor do I feel as isolated as I did at first when I found myself among those who were not—well, not quite regular. They are not to blame. No one is to blame. I smile at them when we meet on the stairs—and they smile back at me, and say: "It's awful bad under foot, ain't it?"

Sarah has done one of them an injustice. She is a Mrs. Edson, and her husband is a traveling man, so he can be here only on Sunday. She slips in and out like a mouse during the week, always alone and always quietly, but well dressed. It is only on Sunday that she rustles and leaves a delicate perfume when she passes. On that day she is always running out into the hall when the bell rings, hoping it is he. Mrs. Short hears her skirts, and it makes her very cross. She goes into Jimmy's room, which is her parlor, talking about lodgers who hang over the banisters and have no ideas of etiquette.

Jimmy's sister comes down every Sunday to sit through the dinner with them. She has a hall bedroom on the top floor, but she doesn't take her meals anywhere because she doesn't eat. She says she wants to keep her figure. It is hard to tell where she keeps it, for she is the thinnest woman I have ever seen—no bust whatever, and all her gowns without fullness.

Jennie has fullness in her gowns, otherwise it would be the same. Gracia is growing quite plump, and when Jennie asked her how she was managing to do it, she said she bathed in salt water.

To go back to Jimmy's sister: she works in a shop, and when she feels the desire for food she nibbles at candy, which is the counter next to hers. Sometimes she has ice cream or coffee, and when the plumber she is engaged to marry takes her out, they have lobster.

It is curious to find that most of these irregular people come from little places just as I do. I wonder if it is the narrowness of the village that wants to make them kick free from it as soon as possible? And when they kick they lose their balance. Sarah tells me that Mrs. Short has a husband who lives on a farm not very far out, and who brings her produce now and then, but he is grumpy and old. Once he came on Monday and Mrs. Short pulled all of Jimmy's shirts off the clothes line. Naturally her being so kind to the trainer would annoy Mr. Short.

After supper we girls often let down the bed and lie on the sofa and tell each other what we want to do in the future—all but Gracia, who says her future is too black to look into. She is such a shallow, stupid girl, it is hard to believe anything somber is ahead of her. I seldom feel that she is in the room, and after she has gone I can't remember her having said anything. I can think of her only in the days to come on a veranda in a suburb—rocking. She seems planless.

Jennie has her life carved out for years. She will be a teacher—for a while—but "ultimately go into platform work." Theodora is very philosophic. She says she will go whichever way the wind blows hardest, as that will be easier than anything else, but she hopes it will blow her toward the stage.

I don't wish that. When I go to the theater now, I stare more at the size of the stage than I do at the performers, and when an actress is left alone up there I don't see how she endures it. I turn away so that there will be one

less person boring holes into her with indifferent eyes. She is such public property—she is for anyone.

My original ideas have changed. Once I hoped to be in a school with only bright, pleasant girls for companions, whom I would teach to speak and to carry themselves well, and to sway with music. I wanted to be completely surrounded by them, and hidden by them, so that I couldn't get out of their good, sweet circle if I wished to. Now I must plan to have some way of escape every little while. I must give my other side a chance. Always, always in my plans, there is Van, whom I shall ever love and who will always love me—I hope—and who will preserve this beautiful relationship which exists between us—I know.

## XII

I HAVE been here three months and I have known Van over ten weeks. "Ten weeks" isn't very lovely in sound to other people, but it is to me, just because I've known him that long.

Yet I have found that he can hurt me—just as he can make me happy. Isn't it strange that anyone should want to do that?

Perhaps he wanted to punish me. I had been out to his rooms the evening before for dinner. I am quite familiar with everything there now. I go in and brush my hair with his brushes, and if he hasn't come in yet I chat a little with Yogo. He speaks of me as "Little miss" to Van and addresses me as "Miss Lobinson."

This night I was asking him about his mother and sisters in Japan, and I was wondering why he won't ever talk of his family to me, when Van came in. He was so quiet, though, that I didn't hear him, didn't know that he was in the room. He came up behind me, drew me back against him and kissed me. And Yogo saw us.

Everything that is left in me of New Washington boiled up. In a rage I struck him in the face. Yogo went into the little kitchen.

Van was white. I was staring at him,

with my hands doubled up on my breast. "Not before servants—not before servants," was all I could say.

"Why not?"

"Because it's not decent."

"Not, eh? May a man kiss his wife before a servant?"

"Of course."

"And he kisses her because he loves her, doesn't he?"

"Yes."

"Well, don't I love you?"

He was hedging me about with snares, and I knew it. Also I knew that I would be snared, but I was still running around in the meshes. I could see myself as a sort of little rabbit.

"Don't I?" he persisted.

"I hope so, Van."

"And don't you suppose that Jap knows we love each other?"

"It's my only excuse for being here."

"And if we love each other, that we kiss each other?"

"I hadn't thought; does he?"

"Of course he does. So what difference does it make whether he's in the room or out of it? What difference does it make, anyway, to anyone outside of your New Washington what a servant sees? He is nothing but an automaton. As soon as we can find machines to do the work of servants we'll dispense with them altogether. I suppose *you* will be haughty before a machine!"

I laughed. I was glad to laugh again—besides, I knew he wanted me to. He sat down at the piano and played moodily. I looked at him as I stood in the center of the room. His heavy-lidded gray eyes rested on me.

"I am still hurt," he said.

I went over and rubbed his poor cheek gently against mine. "I'm sorry I struck you." A sort of delightful enervation was stealing over me. I believe that the passions—those of anger and those that come from much loving—are the same, and hating violently is nearer love than is just mild affection.

"It isn't my cheek only, little child," Van went on; "you've hurt the best of me—the quality that I've always tried to give you. You grant me nothing for—

for a self-control that some men would not have exercised."

I went on smoothing him, but my mind was leaping about. Always in books when a man has kissed a woman she ceases to be a good woman, and soon despair and desertion are her punishment. But Van has held me in his arms and I have clung to him—still I can say my prayers at night. In a way he has sheltered me from those who would not be so gentle.

I bent down and whispered in his ear: "It is this very quality that makes me love you so."

To my surprise he shrugged me off, and, rising, held me back with his hands on my shoulders. "Oh, no, it isn't," he answered; "it is *this* quality that makes you love me so." And he suddenly, roughly, powerfully pulled me into his arms and held me there. The scarab of his scarf pin cut into my forehead. I could hear Yogo come into the room, but I didn't try to get away. Only I knew then why the servant wouldn't talk to me of his mother and sisters.

If I hurt Van that night he hurt me the next day—this is where my punishment comes in. I had come home from Cambridge in the rain, but as I am sent in a cab I don't mind, and love to hear the patter on the roof. The cab is charged to Van, and he gives me a quarter to tip the man, which I hold in my hand all the way. I stare out at the wet ones and wish to give them all a ride; they look in at me, thinking I'm rich, perhaps. They don't know how much I should like to keep the quarter.

The next day it rained, too—soft, beautiful drops, which made the Common look younger than its age, and my heart was bursting like the buds as I walked through it. I stayed late for extra lessons, and when I reached the room toward dusk, Van was there. I danced all about the room. The window was open a little and a hand organ was playing new and popular airs. Everything was new and feeling popular.

Van asked me to get him an evening paper to see the market, and I went in to borrow it of Gracia. Her beloved,

before he went to Florida, had paid in advance for a newspaper right up to the end of school.

I found Gracia crying. It occurred to me that she hadn't been happy of late, and I, who was very happy, should give her some of my joy. So I asked her to come into my room to meet Mr. Ruyme. Her tears disappeared all of a sudden, as though they had not been, and she came in to share my happiness.

She smoked a cigarette with Van. I don't smoke. It seems silly to do what makes one uncomfortable. They laughed at me because I didn't. Van told her of the champagne that went up into my nose at our first supper, and they laughed again. They went on to talk of things to drink, and I wasn't even noticed. Gracia is from the country just as I am, and I don't suppose she ever heard of anything stronger than sweet cider until she came here. And now she tells Van she doesn't care for anything with her meals, but enjoys a cocktail before eating! Of course she never has one at all. Just once I spoke.

"You don't get them at Mrs. Croakes's," I remarked, but they looked over my head.

After that she said she could read palms.

I sat on the stool by the open window and let the soft air blow on me. The globe of the drug store was revolving, but the lights stabbed me, and the ruby ray would gleam like a rush of blood upon my white blouse—then whirl—then come again. It was so dim in the room that Gracia was very close to him. I was too proud to light the gas. It wouldn't have done any good, anyway. When a woman wants to get close to a man she will find a reason. Van kept encouraging her by: "Corking!" and "Oh, I say, am I as bad as that?"

I have never found any flaws in Van—at least none that I haven't, after a while, turned into strong points. But I thought him rather pleased than otherwise when Gracia said he was a bad man, pleased just as one of the boys at home would have been. I wondered, for an instant, if he was getting along so well with Gracia because they were really

alike: both of them pretending to be something that they weren't. Then I remembered how he had been brought up in Paris, and not in New Washington, and of course he couldn't be a bragger.

"Aren't you ripping!" he was saying admiringly.

"Oh, mercy! Where?" she cried, trying to be witty.

"Here," answered Van. I didn't turn around, but I understood.

She gave a little squeal and scolded him.

I kept looking out of the window at the whirling globe, my world, so bright and cruel, throwing colors without caring as to whom they fell upon. I never knew before that the same thing could be so different on different nights.

I planned what I should do when Gracia went away, for someone was to meet her at the Thorndyke and she would have to leave in an eternity or two. First I decided I should say, "Don't touch me," as he came forward. But I gave that up, for then he wouldn't even argue, only go home. No, I should say: "You will have to choose between us, Van." But later I gave that up, for if he chose Gracia I should die.

I groaned aloud at this. To cover it, I made myself hum the nightingale song we had heard at the opera together. I hoped he would catch the air and remember how he had smiled at me out of the darkness, but he didn't. I kept my head up—if I leaned over the tears would fall out of my eyes.

"Now the other hand," Gracia was saying.

Suppose I gave him up altogether? I seized the idea gladly, as though it were something very new and easy. Suppose I said nothing after she went away, talked commonplaces as I got ready for dinner at Mrs. Croakes's—and never spoke to him again. I might even look down from the window upon him the next time he called while Mrs. Short told him I could not be seen.

I talked to myself sternly. I was very much excited and in earnest. I found myself praying for Gracia to go that I might speedily bring this thing about. I wanted it—that is, I seemed to want



it; but when Gracia finally started I found, instead, that I was trying to detain her.

My heart was beating furiously. There was some consolation that I had decided on no war of words. I never last long when it comes to argument. But now I was fighting for a principle. That strengthened me—"fighting for a principle!"

Gracia banged my door, banged her door, banged the front door. I was at the wardrobe getting down my hat. My fingers stuck out and wouldn't bend. Van sat down in the woolly chair again—the light was almost gone.

He looked toward me. "Missy."

I didn't answer. I was fighting for a principle. The principle was still right, but there was a looseness about my heart which had nothing to do with it.

"Missy."

I didn't answer, but it was because I wouldn't let myself. The principle was on the far side of an abyss. I might follow it but I should not be of it. It was an alien to me—this principle—a thing that would bring me the greatest sorrow of my life—and be nothing to him. Then what would be accomplished? Better get joy when I can.

"Missy!"

I looked toward him. He extended his hands, which showed white in the darkness, and raised them as one prepares for a baby. With a moan I ran forward and climbed into his arms.

### XIII

THE spring in Boston is like being in love: bad days slip in among the good ones, and the whole world is at a stand-still; then the sun shines, the tears dry up and we forget that yesterday was stormy. My blood goes crazy at this time of the year. I keep out of doors, and am nursing a crocus in the Public Gardens, which thinks of coming up, until I feel like its mother.

At nights I can't sleep. I send little notes to Van just to say that I am going to bed and shall think of him. I like to write "nightgown" and "pillow" and

close, intimate words. These letters only make him scoff, for there is always Jennie in the red flannels.

When I go out late to post them Theodora sometimes goes with me. The pavements are damp; the lamplights shroud themselves in a mist for the sake of lovers. People laugh out loud; one can hear them a long way off.

"I suppose your heart is swelling, isn't it, Missy?" asked Theodora. She makes fun of me for feeling so much and thinking so little.

"Yes, it is," I admitted. "Of late I seem to be inside of it, not it inside of me. But if my heart is swelling my purse isn't. That keeps us starving. We stretch with our arms open wide for all beautiful things when we have that luxurious, rich sensation; but luxuries cost money and we haven't money."

Theodora flouted it. "You forget that any woman *can* have pretty things if she wants them hard enough."

I was feeling guilty—I had some reason to. "Not unless someone is very kind," I argued weakly.

"Not unless *she* is very kind," she snorted again.

I gripped her arm in resentment against this theory. She swung me around in a half-circle and we started home. Theodora takes a rather dreadful view of life, but it doesn't depress her. The fact that evil is part of living makes it endurable and rather pleasant, for she contends that existence is amusing. She goes around among all kinds of people, but she cares for no one, and I have decided that love is the password opening into a world of understanding of which Theodora, with her wisdom, knows nothing. All my views have changed since I met Van.

"You forget," I said firmly, "that there are men *and* men."

"No, there aren't," she retorted; "there are just men."

Her assurance shook me for the moment. I always go with the last voice. "And are there just women, too?" I thought with terror of all those sleeping in our house that night.

"That's what's funny—there are lots of different kinds of women."

"Then there are some," I plodded, "who wouldn't give freely of themselves just to have pretty things, aren't there?"

"Yes," she admitted grudgingly, "especially the rich ones."

"And there must also be others," I pursued, "who receive—not that they deserve it—but who receive beautiful things without hurting themselves, don't you think?"

Theodora flipped about impatiently. "I wouldn't call it 'hurting themselves,' anyway. They have a right to go on exchange if they want. What makes me mad is that women deceive themselves about the way they get things. They call it by pretty names, but the men know they are getting something by giving something. They have a businesslike knowledge of such values which is intuitive."

"It all harks back to our original idea: poverty's a crime. But there is a law of adjustment, isn't there?" I was trying to find out about something without asking outright. "Don't you believe that a lovely happening might come to us as a sort of reward for our being so dismal—as a reward for eating at Mrs. Croakes's for instance?"

Theodora withdrew her arm. "No more of that, please, Missy. Play in the dust pile if you want to—fill your own eyes, but don't throw it into mine."

"I'm not throwing dust," I cried in anguish.

"You're not? Now I'm going to ask you something—all of a sudden, so get a grip: what did you give in exchange for that expensive hat upstairs behind the bed?"

Blood raced all over my body. "Why, Theodora, I didn't give anything. And I've been speaking generally—not about myself. What a fool a girl would be to grant even the smallest favor for just a hat!"

"Well, you're lucky," she answered, "if you could get *that* hat for nothing."

She started up the steps, but I clung to her. Theodora and I had talked school and teachers and muscles of the forearm ever since I knew her. Now all of a sudden, on a spring night, we were talking truth; and I had been the first to

lie. It occurred to me that ever since I had begun meeting Van I had been obliged to make many excuses that weren't truthful, but I hadn't given them a name. I had not found it difficult to tell Jennie that I had bought the hat at a bargain, and after a while I thought I really had.

"I didn't give up anything, Theodora," I gasped, "but I did commit a little bad error, because Mr. Ruyme gave me the money to buy the hat. It was he who insisted. He said I must look better when I went out with him."

"Yes," acquiesced my friend, "and that made it possible."

"That made it possible!" I repeated. "You mean I wanted it because it was pretty, and that getting it to please him was my excuse as well as his?"

"Well, wasn't it?" asked Theodora bluntly.

I took a deep breath. "Yes, it was." I stood on the front step of our house so as to be on a level with her, and lowered my voice for fear Jimmy the coach might hear us. "You know how I walked for miles every day after school hoping to find a cheap and still a distinguished-looking one, and you know how the cheap ones sat up on my head. In less than four months I've learned to want only the best, and to know it when I see it. I can't have everything that is correct, but it is such a joy to go out looking right. It makes me surer, and I can hold my ground better with Mr. Ruyme then. He likes me better, too, when I am not afraid of him. I—I—don't mean that I'm afraid of him, but his clothes are impressive. You don't think I'm very awful, do you?"

"No, I don't," said Theodora, so stoutly that I had to speak of Jimmy and the open window. "I hope you'll get lots of hats out of him, and everything else you want. He doesn't wish you to meet any other men and have good times, and he ought to pay for it."

I started to protest, but she swept on: "I'm glad you have the hat, dearest, but don't lose sight of the fact that you've given something for it, or if you haven't yet, he'll be calling for it at the first of the month."

I put my arms around Theodora and kissed her. She was the first girl I had kissed for a long time—always before it has been the other way round. I was proud to have a real friend at last, one who could help me and whom I could help. Even though my experience with Gracia's meeting Van had been a sad one, I wanted Theodora to know him and to learn that there is one man who is different from the others.

## XIV

It is surely spring. I awake with a pressure in the back of my head that makes me want to do a million things at once. I can hardly wait until I get down to the Common to see how the trees are doing, and then I can hardly wait until I get to the Gardens to look after the tulip beds.

I see Van almost every other day. Spring is dear, but there is nothing more beautiful in the world than a red car going out to Cambridge. If I'm not in one when I see them jolting over the Park Square tracks, a little piece of my heart goes just the same; and when I am in one my heart jolts more than the tracks, and nobody in the car except me knows what is heaving them about so.

Van is going to Europe on the day I go to New Washington. Every time he mentions it I am wrapped in a cold mist, and my eyes get swimmy. He only looks at me then, and says, "Well?" It is like an unfinished story. I talk about something else quickly.

Yesterday I looked at his nose and eyes and brow—but not at his mouth—so that I might not forget. He was also staring at me, and I thought that he, too, might be trying to commit the moment to memory. I asked him, but he said he was thinking of steamer tickets. He never says what I hope he will, but I love him just as much, for always after he hurts me he caresses me—and I let him. It is the only time that I feel I am losing something by caring for him.

This day he put his lips against mine and I shut my eyes trying to remember that, but he went on speaking and his

heavy teeth almost cut me. "Missy," he started, "the time has come—"

I opened my eyes that I might cease remembering anything about his mouth, putting my finger involuntarily to my hurt lip. The action was more simple than—I think—Van wished. He shrugged his shoulders and reached for a cigarette. "No, the time has *not* come," he amended.

I don't know yet what he meant; I don't want to know. I didn't stay to dinner, and I went home in the red car feeling sort of detached and unclaimed. When we reached the Gardens I took a little walk in them among the tulips. The flowers don't know any more than I do why they came and why they cannot remain.

One tulip had been so beaten down by the heavy rain that it was all be-mired. I tried to lift it up, but the weight of the soil was too great. I cleaned it off, but it had lost its beauty and ambition. If someone had come earlier it might have been easily saved.

## XV

THE graduating exercises are over—my trunk is packed. I have left out my new spring suit, and I am going to wear it to travel in—yes, and my best hat, too. I shall need all the beautiful things that I have to comfort me. The gown I wore last night at the school I am leaving out also, for I can lay it on top after I come home from dinner with Van. Come "home" did I say? Van is my home; I shall be leaving it.

Most of the Juniors wore thin white, but I bought a creamy sort of wool crêpe so that I could go to the theater in it with Van next winter. It has gobelin blue velvet for a belt, and the sleeves and deep guimpe are of net. I ripped up an old family handkerchief to put real point lace on my chemise underneath. I don't know what Mrs. Andrews will say, but the lace over the flesh and the net over that is lovely.

Van was splendid. He didn't come, of course, but he sent a carriage for the evening, and flowers to the four of us.

There were big bouquets for the three Seniors—which they carried down and had handed up over the footlights as a surprise—and a little knot of pansies for me, held together by an enameled pin of pansies with diamonds in the center. I keep wondering how I can explain it when I get to New Washington.

After all, it wasn't such a happy evening. I didn't know I cared so much for Jennie until, during her recitation, the red flannels stuck up from the low cut dress. Why couldn't she have taken them off and not stuffed them down? But, no, no, "not until June," said Jennie. She is going to be a teacher now and she may never have another chance of reciting to the Boston audience that lost their humor through the paralyzing effect of that creeping red. I pray she may never know why they stopped laughing at her selection and watched her in cold horror.

Someone sang "Auld Lang Syne." there was a good deal of kissing, and after a long while Jennie and I reached the rooms. Mrs. Short, an honored guest at the exercises, crackled in to talk it over; Jimmy paid us compliments from the hall; several of the ladies passed the door unnecessarily.

The house was no sooner quiet than, to our surprise, Theodora came in. We inferred that Gracia was staying downtown with her family, for Theodora had a messenger boy and sent off some garments to her. She came in looking rather tame—for her—and very quiet. I petted her. "You mustn't mind," I started; "it's not the end of you, my darling."

"No," she said. "It's the Commencement, isn't it? The real commencement of our lives. Jennie's going off to teach tomorrow, I'm out to hunt for work, and Gracia—well, she learned a lot in her two years in Boston, didn't she?"

"She learned enough to catch a husband," said Jennie with much force. "I saw him there tonight and she's going to be married."

"She is married," replied her roommate simply. "Was married half an hour ago."

Jennie and I stared at her in amazement. Was it for this that my heart had ached for Gracia, for Gracia whom some man loved enough to marry?

"Yes," continued Theodora, "he didn't duck. She can let her corsets go unlaced from now on—poor, tortured girl."

Jennie leaned forward as I leaned backward, automatically.

"Not that?" whispered Jennie.

"Of course," she said. "I thought you guessed."

Jennie and I hadn't guessed. They went on to talk of it, but I couldn't speak for wondering. They had all learned different things, those girls. Knowledge, of a kind, had come to Jennie; Theodora was wise, with no ideals left to tempt her; and the fruit of the tree was ripe in Gracia's garden.

"Education is a young woman's armor," the president had said at the Commencement.

## XVI

HAD it been a tipsy student or a coarse man in the street; had it been a negro, someone who didn't know me, who hadn't studied me, I would not be so flat upon the earth. The day might come when I could lift my head; the hour might come when the sobs way down within my heart would rise and fall, then rise and fall, then disappear.

But Van! But Van! And for him to be astonished when the blow sent me reeling out of his arms—not into them! For him to be astonished that it *was* a blow!

"What is the difference?" he railed at me. "You are of my life; we have grown together. Don't stunt this growth—be of my life completely."

He must have said this hours after I had seen the steamer tickets—I don't know. It sounded late in the street when there were silences in the room. I had never seen those big documents before. There were two—one for him and one for—I had to look again—for "Mrs. Robinson" it read. After a while I understood that I was "Mrs. Robinson"—me with my hair always falling

down! "I was reponsible to no one," had been his argument. I had no folks.

I had tried to run. I remembered the door in the bedroom and I wanted to get through it. I was intercepted. There had been every kind of emotion—tears, and grief beyond tears; I had struck out with my hands and been shaken. His voice had been ceaseless at first, trying to quiet my horror. It was only toward the end that words came to me.

I was crouched down in a corner of his study by that time, my face pressed against the books. I had thought to run again and go out by Yogo's little kitchen—he had gone, left for the night—but my knees had given out completely. Van was towering over me, but only physically. There was a tower of strength inside of me—only, until my knees and heart could get their courage, I must stay huddled there.

"Missy, speak to me," he demanded. "Why are you so crushed? You love me?"

"Yes, I love you." My voice was hardly a voice at all. He knelt down to hear me better. "And I've glorified you. I put you way up high."

"I never asked it of you."

"No, it was my joy. You were different from other men to me. Stories came to me of life, and always you were different."

"Don't you know that a man and woman can't continue this way?"

I drew a long breath; I was not afraid to answer him—for the first time I was not afraid of annoying him. "They don't have to continue this way, Van. When men and women care so much that they can't leave each other, then they marry."

"Ah!" He rose, and I heard him settling down in the big willow chair.

I was not ashamed. "I don't want you to marry me. Even I can see that it wouldn't do. I've never thought of that. I have just thought of going on, and going on. I haven't had an end at all. Women do that."

"I'm not a marrying man, dear girl."

"I've known it all along."

He laughed harshly. "Well, by the

eternal! You've not expected me to marry you, and you've not counted on a deeper relation than the present one, yet you have kissed me and we have clung like lovers. Is that New Washington?"

I turned about and dragged myself up. When I began to think, strength came to me. "Yes, that's New Washington. Girls and young men flirt on the streets, meet in shady woods, make love in hammocks and kiss each other. Oh, not as we do! No two people in the world could ever have loved each other as we have done. It has been wrong; we've been walking on the danger line; but the first danger was back at home where mild loving was condoned."

He brought his fist down upon the arm of the chair. "And do you compare that miserable, squalid spooning with our magnificent happiness?"

"No—no! But it was my primer."

"Then you admit that you have gone on to finer text books?"

I wavered; he was hedging me about again, but it would make no difference. "Yes, it is to finer text books, but books that were not for us."

"Why not? Do you deny yourself an education?"

I thought of the speech of the president: "Education is a young woman's armor." How we can twist an idea to suit ourselves!

"Alleducation should be for our good," I said.

"And is there no good in our loving each other?"

"No, for we are not to marry."

"So the mumblings of a priest, the scratch of a pen, is what makes two individuals virtuous!"

"I have been taught to believe that."

For an instant he was silent. We were standing at either end of the room now, facing each other. Van Ruyn was fighting me as though I were his enemy. His attacks were swift and many-sided. I could not meet them all—I had not the knowledge or the language; but he was only saying words. They held no temptation for me. I bent and waved in the storm, but I had no thought of breaking.

He tried again. "Tell me this, since I have to go back to first principles with

you: have you ever found any place in the Bible where it is wrong to love?"

"No," I answered.

"Then it can't be wrong for you to love me."

"No," I answered.

"Is it your fault," he continued, "that I don't marry you?"

"No," I answered. I was still not ashamed.

"Is there any reason that you should deny yourself the healthy life of a woman in love because some other creature can't recognize the laws of civilization?"

"No." He was closing in upon me, but I was quite untouched.

"All that is asked of us is to do the best we can in life, isn't it?"

"Yes, Van."

"And wouldn't this be the best for you, since I am so low a cur as to offer you nothing else?"

"Yes, Van."

He approached me. "Missy, sweetheart, I'll take the blame. It's just your bad luck that you found me."

He put his hands upon my upper arm. His fingers closed, tightening softly into the flesh. I knew in another moment he would throw me roughly aside, that the end of my lovely spring had come, but I was unwavering. "I can't argue with you, Van. But it's no use. There are generations back of this. You wouldn't be overcoming me; you'd be overcoming an army."

To the last he surprised me. He released his hold, gave me an indifferent pat on either arm, and slinging on a cap, walked to the door.

"Take the cab I send for you and go home. I'd give you some supper, but I'm out for a girl, not a host."

He went off. I took the red car back, as I hadn't money enough to pay for the cab and I wouldn't charge it. I left the little pansy pin, but I couldn't have left the hat—that would have been silly.

It was the midnight car, full of nice people who knew each other. They had been to a party. Not one would have believed that a girl was among them who had just been insulted.

I kept wrapping my cape about me—I don't know why. I think at first I did

it to protect the cream wool crêpe, then I kept on doing it. I heard the lady next to me say to the gentleman who was bending above her: "This fidgety girl child must think I'm a leper." Then she laughed.

A woman laughing at me seemed to be too hard a cross to bear just then. I was afraid I was going to cry before we reached Park Square, but I kept my tongue against the roof of my mouth.

I ran in little spurts most of the way home. A policeman cried: "Go it!" Sometimes I cried out loud, but my voice frightened me. The bed seemed empty without Jennie. I didn't sleep all night, and I lived his going out of the room over and over again.

If he had struck me, I could have believed he cared.

Now there is nothing to look back upon.

## PART II

YESTERDAY morning, as soon as I had finished the dishes, I went out into my flower garden which Mrs. Andrews allows me along the back fence, and I found that the China asters were showing their colors. Then I knew that the summer was over. I was very glad. There will never be a summer like it again. I may be again unhappy, but it will not be my first unhappiness. From now on grief and I will not be strangers when we meet.

Once more I have had to readjust my beliefs to life. Now I know that I shall go on doing it forever. When I left Boston I had thought I could never again retain a loving memory of Van. As the long weeks have crept in and out I have found that remembering him lovingly was all that was left in my mind. I know, too, that some other force than my will must crowd him out of my memory. I want to crowd him out even while I cling to him.

I would not go back to Boston, but Mrs. Andrews insists that I can't afford to do otherwise. I must get my diploma, now that I have already paid one year's tuition, so that I may be a teacher. "You aren't practical, Melissa Robinson," she says.



There is something grim about Mrs. Andrews sending me back to live among all those irregular people, when even I can see that I shouldn't go. But I shall not return to Mrs. Short's. I shall move into the Tremont Street boarding house district, which is not affected by the students. I can room with a girl who is in my class.

A happy feeling comes over me when I think of Theodora, whom I shall see now and then. She had to go to work immediately, and hastily seized a position as teacher of calisthenics to the deaf and dumb in a State institution. The pupils want to get up a dramatic club, she writes, but she fears her sense of humor will not stand the test. I am sure that her kindness will, though.

The man who cuts our grass is pulling my trunk down from the attic. It is scraping over my head now, and of a sudden, with such a mixture of pleasure and pain that I can't tell which is which, I find that I want to go to Boston!

## II

I AM at Mrs. Short's! I share my old room with Theodora, who is to come in from the institution for Saturday and Sunday. Of course I pay the most. I am to take my meals with Mrs. Short and Jimmy in the clean kitchen. So that is the usual way my planning turns out, and, as usual, it has turned out as I must have wished it.

Leaving New Washington was just as when I went before, only not so many of the crowd were down at the train to say "Good-bye, Missy—good-bye, Melissa Robinson!" I tried to be the same all summer, but I was quiet, and some thought I was putting on airs.

It grew very cold in the night on the way down, but I was shy about ringing for blankets. This annoyed me because I thought I was quite a woman of the world, having traveled more than I had the year before, and having eaten in restaurants, but still I was ashamed to ring. In the morning my chest was all drawn together, and when I drew a breath I took only what was necessary.

We were late again, this time owing to a wreck. It seems that I shouldn't go to Boston. In the afternoon my head grew very hot, and I slept a little. I always dreamed that I saw Van, and that he was throwing knives into my breast. I remember that I was glad to see him, even though each time I knew he was going to throw the knives. I tried to go to sleep and dream the hurting over again, for I realize now that I shall only see him in my dreams. All the time I was in Boston last winter we never met on the street. And everything was on my side, too, last winter.

When I reached the city I knew just what to do. I crawled to the herdics and gave the Tremont Street address where the marriageable girl lived. The neighborhood was very somber and wet. The boarding houses had not yet begun to fill up. Indeed, they never do. Appeals to rent rooms are in all the windows like plague flags.

There was no light in my place when I rang the bell, but after a great hollow clanging an anxious landlady appeared with a candle. She said owing to a mistake the gas had been turned off, but there would be light in the morning. My acquaintance hadn't arrived yet, and the landlady couldn't let me have a large square room, even for the night, unless I paid the full price, but I could have a hall bedroom, "a very nice hall bedroom and no one would suspect it." She meant the same old sitting room appearance.

I was pretty tired. I said I would rather have it like a bedroom just then. She said she hoped I wasn't going to be sick—last year she had had to send away a diphtheria case—"from out this very escritoire—which is a bed." We were in the little room, things coming down and being other things every minute. The odor of insecticide was overpowering; the rain beat against the window; the candle dripped on me.

I asked for some tea, but the landlady said they didn't serve meals in the house. She would go down and get me a towel, however. I lay down on the escritoire which had just become a bed. Pain rolled up and engulfed me for a moment, then the heat increased. And

they sent away the girl who had been ill of diphtheria in this very *escritoire*! I laughed to myself—I should have said *on* this very *escritoire*, I corrected, or *in* this bed. Then I became terrified again, thinking of the sending away. I rose from the bed, and, seizing my bag, felt my way through the gloom to the head of the stairs. The street light from the glass of the front door illumined my path down. I tiptoed like a thief. When I reached the last step a faint ray was climbing upward from the basement steps. It was the landlady with the towel. In a panic I flew to the front door, opened and closed it gently and hurried along the street as rapidly as my short breath would permit.

I walked until I found a cab, but I was quite wet by then. When we reached the house I sat on the front steps while the cabby rang the bell. I cried when I saw Mrs. Short, but I don't remember much except the doctor, and hot things that Jimmy kept going on a gas stove—and Mrs. Short wore her clean wrapper all night. Whenever I awoke I could see the globe throwing colors on the wall. So the world was going on just the same.

### III

By the time all of the girls were back and the school was in full swing I was able to ride down in the car. I always watched out of the window—after I looked through the car—for Van, and I held my breath when we turned the corners. It kept my heart beating pleasantly and sadly at once. I found the same enjoyment in the smell of the beautiful falling leaves.

I was glad it was more pleasure than pain, for that is to be my future life. Theodora and I have decided it. She came up from the institution the first day I was able to be around and gave me a lecture on being happy.

"You seem to think," she said, "that you can't have a good time at all, because the thing you want to have a good time over is not in your life. Did it ever occur to you that there are a number of other ways of enjoying yourself? That

there are a number of other men, for that matter?"

"No, no!" I cried. The thought of men, all alike, "all demonstrating on the same plane," as they say at school, made me sickish.

"Oh, yes, there are; and the only way to forget one man is to take an interest in some others. I'd say 'one other,' except that it wouldn't do for you. Having driven out one nail with the second, you'd find the second one making you so much more miserable than the first that you'd be hustling around with the hammer to drive number one into his place."

I laughed out loud.

"There!" said she. "Why don't you laugh like that oftener? You ought to find enough to amuse you in this house if I can scarcely control myself in a deaf and dumb institution. Don't creep around with your eyes shut. Look at the inmates, and smile."

"I think these women are tragic."

"Do you? Well, they wouldn't thank you for it. They can get more pleasure out of crying 'because Charley is late' than you would out of a whole evening with that beloved heavy swell of yours."

"He isn't mine any more."

"And a good job, too. There are others, my dear. I'll introduce you to them. Next Saturday week I'm invited to lunch at the Boston Tavern and to 'bring a friend along.' You can be the friend."

Mrs. Short came in with some beef tea. She had time to be kind, although she was cleaning up Gracia's room for a newcomer. Gracia was up in the country, very content with the baby.

"It's a lovely room, the first flight rear," sighed Mrs. Short. "I wish I could afford it."

"Yes," sympathized Theodora. "It must be tiresome going next door every night."

I was about to murmur responsively, but to my amazement they both chuckled.

"Laugh, too, Missy," said Theodora, after she had gone out. "You see, you're 'in the know' now; she's taken you in."

"I don't see anything to laugh at," I retorted, sipping my tea.

"You're sufficient," she said drily, as she rose to put on her wraps. "But apart from you, isn't there anything funny in that woman saying good night and slamming the front door every night of her life, when no one believes her?"

"Then she doesn't go?" I asked.

"No, lamb, she doesn't."

I was still very unsmiling, although I understood. "And a white-haired woman!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," said Theodora, starting toward the door, "and you'll be white-haired, too, before you're through unless you begin to philosophize."

I cried out in agony: "Oh no, Theodora, oh, please God, no; surely someone will take hold of me by then!"

She came back and put her arms around me for a moment. "I hope so, darling; I hope so. In the meantime just grin and don't you care."

I was very conscious when I went down to dinner that night. But Jimmy and Mrs. Short were as ordinary as ever. The room next to mine is being fixed up for an old friend of hers who has been out West. She is Mercy Merrick. Years ago she roomed here, and then, "My dear"—to quote Mrs. Short—"she met a very nice gentleman from the West, and business took her out there."

"Is that his name?" asked Jimmy. "Business?"

We both gave evidence of appreciating that, and I realized again that I was "let in on the know." At least I laughed.

#### IV

It is still a long way off from the luncheon party. Although I go to school each day I can't do any active work, so I can't help thinking of what I shouldn't have any interest in. It horrifies me that I don't care much about beginning my dancing. I sit and wriggle my wrists and ankles to keep them supple, but I'm glad when it's time to go home and I can watch from the car window again.

Miss Merrick is here now. She doesn't say much, but when you are talking to

her you feel that she would rather listen to you than to anyone else in the world. Although you'd tell her anything at all about yourself, you wouldn't think of asking her any questions. She is low-voiced and gentle, but she seems to speak through veils. I wonder what the veils are that separate us?

She had to come back to Boston for her health. She coughs a good deal. Her skin is very fair and transparent. And her big diamond earrings pull down the ears. Her hair is short, mouse-colored and curly. She always comes to her meals carrying a black bag. She said once she hoped the bag wouldn't wear out before the contents did. Her clothes are made over in a very poor fashion from old silks. "Nothing new for years," she told Mrs. Short once.

"I'm glad you held on to all your diamonds, Merrick," Mrs. Short has said a number of times. "They're just so much money." She always speaks of that in a relieved voice.

And, "There will be enough to last," Miss Merrick always replies simply.

Last night she played on the piano and sang very quietly.

"But oh, but oh, I dread the day,  
The day when you'll forget me—"

came floating up as I sat in the big chair looking out. It wasn't a noble song, but I cried, and then, very much ashamed, tried to find something amusing in life.

After a little the front door banged, and Mrs. Belstone came in sobbing out that she couldn't find Mark. That was funny in a way, for last year she couldn't find Matthew. She is always planning to go on a trip to New York, and then has to come back because she hasn't been met at the station.

Miss Merrick came out of the parlor to quiet her before Mrs. Short, who was downstairs, could hear. She knows our landlady's regard for etiquette. "It's just a misunderstanding," she soothed.

"Yes," snuffed poor Mrs. Belstone, "but last year Matthew treated me the same way."

"That may be so," responded Miss Merrick brightly, "but think of Luke and John ahead of you."

She didn't comprehend, but went on up to her room—three flights in the rear. Next to her was Miss Cherry, doing some extra embroidering for her shop, and they would have been such company for each other, but they never speak. All of them spend hours alone, but each feels she is too good for the other.

Of course Mrs. Edson, wife of the traveling man, is really better than the rest. The wife of the traveling man? I wonder if I am wrong about her? And if I am, is it funny?

## V

VAN has come to see me! There is a great deal to be said before I get to this, but I must put it down: Van has come to see me! Van has come to see me!

Things have not been very engrossing in the house, although Mrs. Short has been eaten up with interest in the lady and daughter who have taken the room back of the parlor. She rolls the words "mother and daughter" on her tongue as though the respectable sound gave tone to her establishment. I feel a little out of it—the "young lady students" have always been her boast before.

The mother is Mrs. Reed and the girl is Pearl. One is of a slippery plainness, and the other is of a slippery prettiness. They have no good common sense. The mother goes in for cults and the daughter is a public entertainer. She sings, they say, and is allowed the piano for an hour every day to practise, but if Mrs. Reed is out at that hour, Pearl doesn't sing at all—which no one minds.

I wish I could like them better. I have to talk to myself about it, and once I talked to Miss Mercy—I call her Miss Mercy now, having been invited.

"I suppose it's jealousy," I ended, "because that Pearl girl goes out in the evening and makes so much money giving entertainments. I need money a great deal because the doctor says I must sleep alone to keep my strength, and I must have good food, so it's going to be pretty hard for me unless I can earn a little extra."

"Well, perhaps," returned Miss Mer-

cy, lingering on her words—"perhaps you don't entertain the same way that she does."

"No, I don't," I admitted. "I am kept on humdrum steps at school. I feel some days that they are deceiving me about my talent, just for my tuition. I pray to die then."

She gave my hand a little squeeze. "You are the real artist. But go on—don't stop—don't ever stop. I stopped—well, it's a great mistake."

I wanted to ask more of that, but there were the veils about her face. "I suppose," I inquired as I was leaving the room, "I could stop long enough to go to a party." This was the Saturday morning of the luncheon.

"I suppose so," she smiled, "but parties won't take the place of anything big."

"Oh, don't say that," I cried in alarm. "Try them," she answered.

I went into my room and put on my cream wool crêpe so as to start as well as possible. I made myself do it. It had been bought for the theater with Van, and I had worn it that last night. It was his—I felt him in the room. I pretended it was he clumsily fastening up the hooks and eyes as I myself was struggling with them at the back. When Theodora came in suddenly I almost screamed.

We went down in the car and walked up Washington Street until we came to a little narrow alley, which Theodora suddenly pushed me into. At the end was a good-looking hotel, and polite servants.

"This is the place where everybody eats and nobody talks about," she said, and then, very importantly, to the correct doorman: "Mr. Rafferty's party?" And we were shown into a private room immediately.

It was quite large, with a piano and easy chairs and a beautifully set table in the center. At a sort of buffet two men were looking over some plans. They came forward to shake hands with "Miss Theo," as they called her, and then with me.

I knew unless I began talking right away I should never speak at all, so I

remarked to the portly, black-haired man whom they called "Senator" that it was funny to have such a nice hotel in such a bad neighborhood. Then I was afraid he would be offended, so I added hurriedly that, of course, mine was much worse.

"Oh, the Boston Tavern knows the advantage of hiding," he answered. His voice rose and fell in sweeping cadences. He looked over me as though always in the habit of speaking to more than one. "And where do you live, Miss Robinson?"

"I live on Columbus Avenue." I was ashamed of my address.

"H'm—ah, yes. The car service is very good on that street"—doing the best he could for me. "As I have often told the Senate, that is the value of these short franchises."

I explained that we students had to live there because it was cheap. We didn't enjoy living so homelessly.

"We'll fix that some day," he announced loudly to the hotel. "There should be clubs for the girl students in Boston—good motherly clubs. They do it in Paris—they do it in Paris, my wife tells me."

I was astonished that he was married, but it didn't seem to trouble him. I looked at the places at the table. There were five.

"All here but Rafferty," he rumbled, following my eyes. "As usual, the host shows up at the last gasp."

"Ah, well," broke in the pleasant, deliberate voice of the Judge, a tall, thin man with gray hair. He took off his glasses when he spoke and snapped them on again when he had finished. "It doesn't matter just as long as he's on hand when the bill comes in."

A voice broke in on us. "And a fine way to be talkin' of the one who gave yu yer jobs!"

We all turned from the plans toward which we had drifted to welcome a thick-necked, keen-eyed, slouchy man with red hair turning gray. "Hello, Boss," and "Hello, Rafferty," came from the men. Theodora said, "Hello, Chief," and led me over to him.

He didn't come to me nor did he take his hat off immediately. "Miss Melissa

Robinson," he repeated after her, shaking my hand up and down. "Excuse a laboring man for being late at his own shindig. These sons of guns get no apology."

The Senator and the Judge didn't care. Theodora said she had been crying her heart out over him. "Devil a tear from you," he answered her, pitching his hat and coat at the attendant, "but you'll get a cocktail for the pretty speech."

A waiter had come in with a tray of them. There were two apiece. "Bless me," said the Judge, snapping off his glasses, "this looks like a Maine drug store behind the prescription counter. Come one, come all."

"I don't think I'd better," I said.

Rafferty lowered his first glass, which he had already drained. "Good," he approved. "We let Theodora here have one, because she's part of the gang, but it always makes me mad when my wife takes 'em."

"Are you married, too?" I cried out.

Only Theodora understood the despair in my voice. The men thought it was a compliment to Mr. Rafferty, and "Ah-haed!" loudly.

"We are all married, Miss Robinson," orated the Senator, "all married men; and for that reason we have to slip up an alley now and then for a little quiet talk. Isn't that fair?"

I thought about it with my head on one side. "It's fair to the wives," I decided. I was really trying to justify myself.

The Judge and the Senator gave each other pokes in the side, and Mr. Rafferty began piling the divan cushions on one of the dining chairs. "We've got one of those infant terribles among us," he was shouting. "Lift her up in the high chair, and mind what yu say before her, gentlemen."

As the luncheon proceeded they felt no necessity for small talk. They ate in silence when they felt like it, and when something occurred to them they spoke. Every now and then one of them would sigh and say: "This is what I call cutting loose." All sorts of subjects came up. They listened to Theodora's criticisms of certain methods at the institution, and

laughed tolerantly when I gave an imitation of Pearl practising for the entertainments. Then they would drop into politics, which kept Theodora and me silent. Mr. Rafferty grew ugly once.

"I'll smash 'em," he said; "I'll break every mother's son of 'em. When I get through they won't have a rag to their sneakin' backs." He caught me looking at him rather round-eyed. "Unless," he added, "you hold up your little finger to save 'em, Miss Missy."

I held up my little finger immediately. He leaned over and kissed it with a smacking sound. It was awkwardly done, but they all seemed gratified with his gallantry.

"It is at the Boston Tavern, Miss Robinson," said the Senator, thinking it time to explain conditions, "that generals are made, armies are mobilized and battles are won."

"Do you hear him?" groaned Rafferty. "Always talkin' as though he was hangin' over the tail end of a wagon election evel!"

"It is at the Boston Tavern," said the Judge rather gravely, teetering his glasses, "that what is heard is forgotten."

Mr. Rafferty continued flippant. "That's a judicial warning, ladies." He deposited some chocolate sauce where I didn't want it. "That's the joy of being out with little girls like these. They don't know what we're talkin' about—and they don't care."

"I don't care for anything in this world at present," said Theodora, finishing her dessert, "but this cake."

"And I don't care for anything in this world," I started—but then I couldn't go on and be polite.

The Boss leaned over again. "I'll complete it for you. 'But for Rafferty'—say it, Miss Missy."

We were pushing back our chairs and the conversation was general. I shook my head defiantly.

"I'll make you say it some day," he whispered.

"Oh, no, you won't," I answered coolly.

I walked over to the piano and sat down. How wonderful it was that I

could say just what I wished before a big man called the Boss, when I was so stumbling and tongue-tied before Van!

The men went at the plans again, which were outlines of an underground railway, and I played a little. Then Theodora and I drifted into popular songs. One was about Rafferty, although I had never known he was a real person before. He was delighted. He offered five-dollar bills to both of us. Theodora took hers, and I handed mine back. He grew red and put it on the coal fire. The other men pretended not to have noticed. It was terrible to see five dollars burning up.

He was smiling again in a minute. The three politicians stretched out in easy chairs, sometimes joining in the chorus with us. "Ain't this great!" ran repeatedly among them. I didn't think it was so awfully great, but it was killing the day.

"You couldn't dance if I played for you, could you, Missy?" asked Theodora, who was bound to show me off.

"Say, are you a dancer, too?" burst out the Chief.

"Yes, I am," I replied, "but I sha'n't dance today." I felt the old conscious misery of appearing before people with eyes staring at me.

"The next time perhaps we'll have the dance," suggested the Judge.

"Is there going to be a next time?" I asked. On the whole I was rather glad.

The Boss rose decisively. "You bet—and next Saturday. There's always going to be a 'next' if there's been a 'time.'"

Theodora ordered me straight home to lie down while she went off with the Judge to buy some literature for the institution. Or rather, she went on ahead, and he was to meet her in the book store—quite by accident. The Senator left to go into the hotel lobby, and Mr. Rafferty and I were alone.

"He hasn't made a speech for two hours, and it's tellin' on him," he explained as he held my coat upside down.

"Shall I go out by myself, too?" I asked.

He eyed me keenly. "You poor, pitiful little thing, that's so brave and saucy!



You go out with me, and I'll knock down the first man that looks at us."

When we reached Washington Street he put me in a cab and paid the driver. He lifted his hat clumsily when he said good-bye, and the pressure of his hand on mine made me scringe. But I liked the power of him. I liked my power over him.

I was about to lean back against the cushions contentedly when another thought brought me upright: "But this man is married! This man is married!" And just for one minute I had seen a way out of my misery!

I climbed to my room, bewildered by the new problem, bent over by it.

It was almost dusk. From the street I had seen that the globe was already going round. When I opened my door I found Van standing by the window with the colors falling upon him.

He swaggered toward me. I saw that it was a swagger, but I didn't care. I saw again that his face was cruel, but I didn't care. I backed against the door, which closed it. What would he say to me about our last night together? How could he bridge the abyss that lay between us?

But he admitted no abyss. "Hello, dear," he greeted me. "I was delayed in Europe and have just returned. How are you?"

"I've been ill," I answered, staring up at him.

"Poor baby!" He stooped down and kissed me.

I lifted my arms and put them about his neck. I closed my eyes. He was cruel, merciless. But he was here—he was here—he was here!

## VI

ALL the leaves are off the trees; before one turns a corner one must shrug up for the cold wind. There is no warmth in the sun when it shines, and Columbus Avenue is endless when I walk home from school.

I am afraid to go out at night for fear I may miss Van. Last year I could take chances and never fail to be home, or at

least to find him waiting. Now I do the waiting, but he doesn't come. I told him that I was to have the room alone except Saturdays and Sundays.

"That will be pleasant for you," he replied.

I tried to smile lightly. "It will be—if you come to see me."

He rested his pale gray eyes on me. He didn't seem to be looking—he was planning. "Of course. Expect me any evening."

So I began expecting him, feeling it would be Monday, since on Saturday he had first called. But it wasn't Monday, nor any other day, and three weeks have passed.

I watch for him from the window. Last year I never missed seeing him from the time he turned the corner at the pharmacy. He always came from the Back Bay, where he dined at his club, except once when he drove up in a cab from the other direction and was in the room before I knew it. Such laughing! I had forgotten all about that incident until the other night. I wish I had not remembered it. Now I listen for the sound of wheels coming up from downtown, too.

At half past nine I go to bed, but last night, even after the lights were out, the doorbell rang and I slipped into the hall to say to Mrs. Short that I was up. She was cross about it, for she had already slammed the front door and gone to the neighbor's. It was not for me, anyway. It was a telegram for Mrs. Edson. "Not coming, I fear," she said as she ran down the stairs. She, too, had been listening in the hall.

This is not a House of Mirth, and Theodora cannot make it so. Mrs. Edson's husband is not a traveling man—nor is it funny. There is nothing at all funny about what happened last week when the doorbell rang.

Mrs. Short and Sarah were getting the dinner ready and I said I would go upstairs to answer the bell. I wanted to, of course. I had a presentiment, but my presentiments are never right of late. It wasn't Van.

Instead, two little boys were on the steps. They were poorly dressed, with

stumpy boots and wool caps pulled down over their ears. Both were very wet from the heavy rain, but their faces were beaming.

"Excuse me, ma'am," said the younger one, "but could I speak to Nonie?"

"Nonie?" I was perplexed.

"Yes'm, the girl."

"Our girl is Sarah."

"No'm, I mean Nonie—Nonie Edson. I'm her brother."

"Yes'm. He's her brother," affirmed the other one eagerly.

"Oh," I laughed, "you mean Mrs. Edson. I didn't know her first name."

The little boy set his lips. "No'm, she ain't married. She came down from Nova Scotia, and when she got a place here she wrote it back—just in case of sickness."

"On a postal card she wrote it," chanted the other.

"And her name is Edson?"

"Yes'm. I'm her brother, and this fellow's my friend. If it ain't too much trouble at supper time, could I see her?"

"I'm his friend," echoed the older little boy. "We've come down from Nova Scotia as a surprise."

I looked into their bright faces until they grew misty in my eyes. I was trying to apply some of my dearly bought knowledge to this situation. "I'll go up and ask," I said to them. "I—if you don't mind waiting." I couldn't altogether close the door upon the little visitors. I dared not leave it open, fearing that they would hear me at Mrs. Edson's room.

"We don't mind waiting, thank you."

I almost shut them out, then flew up the stairs. Mr. Edson was in that night, although it was not yet Saturday. The two were cooking something in a chafing dish. "The salt, Nonie—the salt," he was saying. When she answered my knock I beckoned her outside.

She came out, closing the door. Mr. Edson never liked to be stared at. "Yes, Miss Robinson?" she asked blithely.

I put my finger on my lips too late to warn her. I held her hand while I whispered: "Is your own name Nonie Edson?"

She loosened her hand and snapped at my wrist. "Is there anything wrong at home?"

"There are two little boys downstairs to see you." With a groan she turned toward her room. I held her back. "One says he is your brother. You've got to see them."

By this time she was on her guard again. "I have no relatives. I can't see them. This will make my—my husband very angry."

"They've come down from Nova Scotia. You've got to see them."

"But, my God, don't you see I can't?" In her distress her voice broke from its whispered bounds and rang out clearly. From below, as if in answer to it, came a cry from her brother:

"Nonie!"

In horror we stared from out the darkness down into the lighted hall below. The boys were at the newel post, their unseeing eyes lifted up to us, who were hidden in the blackness. The door must have blown open, and, caught by a familiar accent, the lad had happily responded to it.

The silence was appalling. Again he called, but doubt and bewilderment were in the childish wail:

"Nonie!"

"Go down," I mouthed imploringly.

She pulled herself away from me, swept back into her room and crashed the door shut. The air was sweet with the perfume of her lacy gown.

I went down the two flights. They were still standing—but no longer waiting. The mystery was too deep for their young minds. But she had passed them by.

"The lady—Mrs. Edson—says," I stammered—"she says it's a mistake. Her name is Helen."

The little fellow looked at me simply. "She's my own sister," he replied.

"She's his own sister," the older little fellow echoed.

They turned and clumped out into the wet night.

I couldn't tell Mrs. Short what had happened. Late that night, after I had let down the folding bed, which brings one side of it against the big doors be-

tween my room and the next, Miss Mercy came in.

She was terribly thin in her patched nightgown which had once been beautiful. A little shawl was around her. "I thought I heard suspicious sounds," she prefaced.

I denied them, sopping my eyes with the sheet. "But if you sit down I'll tell you." She sat down at the foot of the bed.

But my story did not surprise her, only she was very sorry. "He has taken her name, you see. He becomes Mr. Edson when he crosses the bridge to this side of the world."

"He lives in Boston, then?"

"Oh, yes; I know of him. He has a family over by the river somewhere."

I sat up in bed. "A family—a wife?"

"Yes—God help her!"

"The wife, you mean?"

She hesitated. "I mean them both, the woman and the wife. But mostly the woman. He'll go back to the other—they always do."

It seemed so strange to have Miss Mercy, with that name, on the bad side. "But Mrs. Edson has wronged the other," I pursued.

Miss Mercy coughed and wrapped her little shawl closer around her. She spoke drearily. "Oh, yes, the woman has wronged the wife; and she is paying for it by the eternal fear that some day she will be left alone again."

"She wrote her people that she had gone into service. Perhaps she will—later."

She rose, sighing. "Not likely. She has learned the beauty of refinement; but more than that, she has learned to love. That is hard to do without. One need not be sorry for a spinster. One does not miss what one has never known." She tucked the coverlet about me. "But if one is wise she will avoid the benedicts in life. It spells sorrow for too many."

I caught her hand to detain her. "And the other women in this house—oh, Miss Mercy, tell me—are they all married men who come to see them?"

She stood in the dark by my bedside reflecting. "I seem to see an image of

myself in you. You are learning as I did; but we must learn, I suppose, one way or the other. Are they all married? As it happens, I believe they are."

After she went back to her room the Boss kept recurring to my mind. A married man is now sending me flowers! I look for the name on the box when it first comes, but it is never from Van's florist. Then I take them to the girls at school.

Why can't it be with me as with Theodora? She makes no instinctive individual selection, and no one takes her entirely for his own. She is happy with all of them, and cares for none. I find myself always for one—always for one in every gathering where there are men.

But that is my way, and I recognize it now. Why can't I meet someone who wants to marry me? I want to be guarded and encircled; my old planning won't do. It must be a stronger chain than little daisy links made by school-girls' arms—I'm past that. And the man I have met who might help me is married already.

## VII

WHEN I finally wrote Van a note he answered it. But I listened for two days before it came. Listening is a new kind of torture. First I hear the postman's whistle, and that doesn't always mean us; but when his feet shuffle on the steps I know we women waiting in the house are to suffer or to be glad. When the dull clap of the metal lid to the post-box in the vestibule makes it even more certain, I go down. But I went down many times before I could see through the iron latticework of the box the gray-green of his writing paper. I used to steal along, for I was ashamed to be so often disappointed. Pearl was almost always looking, too, and she was seldom disappointed. When the note did come it was charming:

DEAREST:

I shall take pleasure in calling on a young lady who writes me that she is having some kind of an ache. For the life of me I can't make out whether it is of the heart or of the head, but it

seems that I am needed. And we shall put our battered heads together and our battered hearts together—sha'n't we, little love?—and diagnose the case. Expect me soon. V. R.

For three days I hurried home after school and put on my pale blue cashmere, which has been made over into a pretty house dress; and each day Mrs. Short would say: "Expecting someone?" and Miss Mercy would reply: "Can't the child dress up for us?"

The second night I had been asked to go to the theater, or rather Rafferty sent me seats, which was his custom, but I gave them to Mrs. Short for fear of missing Van. But the fourth afternoon, when a girl invited me to a concert from three to five, I accepted.

I was very angry with Van. I said to myself: "Oh, this is too much—there must be no more of it—no more of this miserable groveling—no more of this wringing of my soul in the dark!" I took deep breaths, long ones, through the first part of the concert. I felt emancipated. I was so glad to find that all of a sudden, just by the making up of my mind vigorously, I had put Van out of my life forever.

But it was not a very good concert. Had it been better I should not have grown so nervous through the second part. My attention to it wavered. Old haunting pictures came back to me. I was by the window with my arm linked carelessly through Van's; I was dining at his table; rough tweed was against my cheek. The memories crowded up around me like prison bars.

Like bars! But that was what I had always wanted, I reminded myself. I had always felt the need of being cloistered, shut in. I had felt it more than ever since meeting men, married men for whom I do not care but whom I find not entirely unattractive. I wanted to be sheltered—and Van alone could do it.

A new thought came to me: if I told Van all this, and asked him for mercy's sake to let me be sure that there is only one man in the world and he that one—would he respond to me? Would he take pride in my utter need of him, and would it be sufficient for him to have the sure knowledge that my love saved

me for him alone, if not for him entirely? Would he—would any man be great enough for that?

I said I was ill, and left the concert. I took the car—I never thought of the five cents; I was sick with the thought that I might miss him. The car was blocked near the house and I ran the rest of the way. I let myself in with my latchkey and rushed into my room. It was empty. I was weak with relief—and disappointment. I turned to the dressing table to remove my hat, and there, written boldly across the mirror with what must have been the soap for crayon, was the signature, "Ruyne."

I threw myself about the room, crashing into the furniture. I did not hold in at all. I cried aloud. It was too hard, too hard to bear. My wraps went into a heap on the floor and I followed them. I told it all to the faded roses in the carpet. They didn't care; they brightened up under my tears. After the storm was over I was dreadfully tired. I dragged myself over to the couch. I remembered the beginning of a last long sob, but I must have gone to sleep in the middle of it.

Silence, silence, silence, then the consciousness that a door had opened and closed—that I was very happy—something wonderful was against my face—the odor of cigarette smoke and a man's hair tonic mingled with my dreams, and after a sweet breathing in of it, slow returning consciousness to the full realization that I had been sleeping, with Van's head on the pillow beside mine as he knelt by the couch.

I didn't let him know for a long time that I was awake, dreading that he might lift his head; and I should have gone on forever that way but I feared his body was so twisted in such a position that he might be uncomfortable. I turned and smiled. I had still my plan to unfold—if I had the courage—but all the bitter words I had prepared during the waiting weeks were gone.

He rose to sit by my side, smoothing my dress and setting my sailor collar straight. Then he lighted a cigarette with his usual broad, elaborate gestures. I think "flamboyant" would be the word

for him. It was only last year that this sweeping manner was the most elegant in the world to me; now I know that he would be finer if he were simpler. I discover flaws in him, but I keep on loving him. I almost wish I hadn't found anything wrong—there is a sort of shame in caring for a man who isn't quite—oh, I must be mistaken when I say it—quite a gentleman.

As he sat by my side blowing cigarette smoke into my hair and nibbling at my fingers—all light things—the plan of throwing myself upon him for protection, which seemed so natural at the concert, was now very remote. It made my heart beat fast to think of it. He put his hand over the flutter of laces which my quickened pulse was stirring and raised his eyebrows whimsically.

"What's this commotion, Missy? Your heart's going like a driven doe's."

I took his hand in both of mine and held it against my throat. "I've never been called a doe before."

"No? You've their coloring, even to your frightened eyes."

I reflected. "I don't think I ever saw a doe. Oh, yes." My mind traveled back over eons of days, happy and unhappy. "I saw that painting—do you remember where it was, in the private dining room the first night I ever had supper with you?"

"I saw only you that night, sweetheart."

"The picture was a pack of hounds dragging down a doe."

He laughed. "The Reynolds Hotel has more humor than I imagined. But that doesn't refer to us."

"Perhaps not to you, but to me—yes." I had decided to go on with it.

He withdrew his hand, fumbling for another cigarette and a match. "So you are pursued, eh? Don't you flatter yourself?"

I didn't reply to that. "Is the Boston Tavern a nice place to eat, Van?"

He put out the match with a whisk of his hand, threw the cigarette into the fireplace, and folding his arms, stared down at me coolly. "What do you know about the Boston Tavern?"

"I go there for luncheons—and dinners sometimes."

"With whom?"

"With a party."

"Always a party?"

"No. Of late alone—once or twice. Not alone exactly—with one other, I mean."

"Oh, yes, one of the 'hounds.' Well?"

"I don't want to go there."

"Then why do you?"

I turned over and buried my face in the pillow. I couldn't endure his merciless stare as once more I bared my heart to him.

He put his hand on my shoulder and shook me. "Well?"

"I go because I'm lonely—for you, Van."

"A—ah!" His sigh of satisfaction was a knell in my ears—vespers for my planning, matins for his. He once more had the upper hand. He deserved it, for he bore the cheap honor more easily than I.

"Tell me all about it, Missy."

My answer was unintelligible to him. "I can't hear you; wait." He lifted me in his arms; my head was again in the old place against his coat—my home.

"Who are these men, Missy?"

"I can't tell you—it doesn't matter. They are powerful men, and one of them is a political boss."

"But, my dear child, one can't love a boss."

"I'm lonely. I'm eaten up with it. Whenever a woman is lonely then is the time to be afraid."

He relaxed his arms to let me drop a little that he might look at me more completely. "Well, you're a cold-blooded proposition. You appear to contemplate his dragging you down—doelike—with the utmost certainty. Why does he get what is denied me? Why—"

"No, no, no! You don't understand."

I was clinging to him passionately. "Nothing will ever happen except the cheapening of my soul. I don't want to go to their parties. They are married men. The Boss is a married man. But I wait so long for you, and then they ask me, and I go that I may forget for a minute that you have ever lived. It's not right, and I know it, so today at a

concert I had a plan—" I gasped; my mouth was dry. I prayed for words, that I might make it very plain how much I needed him.

He pressed his lips against my hair. "Go on, my girl, go on. Don't keep me waiting." He was softly tender—he was so sure.

"It was a plan—to ask you to come to see me—more often—just to be kind if it meant nothing else to you—just to be kind—and to help me through the last year of my schooling. I can manage somehow—when I get away from here—where it will not be so easy to do the wrong thing—where there will be more people doing the right thing. Will you see me through, Van? Will you?"

I was shaking, not with sobs but with nerves. He soothed me gently. His tone rang with that tender quality which he could always put on and off like a garment. "I'll be with you any night, dear heart, and every night, dear heart, and—" His voice sank to a whisper, but I caught the phrase.

I twisted myself free from him, and walked until I struck the opposite wall. My mouth was against it as I spoke. "I didn't mean that—oh, Van, I'm sorry, but I didn't mean that." I was terribly afraid of him just then.

He followed me over and pulled me around. "What are you outlining then? The same old tea party?"

I gripped his coat lapels for fear he would leave me. "Van, you must listen. It will—it is going—" I had no words. "Oh, Van, try to make it a sort of philanthropy! Yes, that is it, a sort of charity—even if it's hard—just for the rest of the year. Just think, it will be something that no man has ever done before—something wonderful—a man saving a woman from herself, and from himself. Oh, Van, try it! There isn't any other way. And all the time it will be because I love you so. You can keep thinking of that—so it will be unusual—and keep you interested. 'For after all,' you can say, 'no woman can care for me as she cares.' Oh, Van, try it!"

It was some time before he began to laugh, but he laughed a long time to make up for it. I was staring up at his

large teeth. I knew before I had finished that I had lost. I knew it, I expect, before I had begun. "Oh, God, let me hate him!" passed through my mind.

He shook me loose and went over to the chair, where he must have thrown his coat and hat when he came in the second time. "I should like to oblige you," he said, "but I'm just a miserable dog—like the rest of your friends. The Creator made me and He gave me a certain amount of restraint, but He put a limitation on it—for a reason. I haven't been to see you, for our dissimilarity of opinions made it impossible. You may continue to coquette with nature if you wish. I don't wish."

"Then why did you come to see me this autumn?" I cried out in anguish. "I hadn't expected you."

For the smallest part of an instant he hesitated. Then a dull red came into his face as he saw that I had scored ever so slightly. "I thought a picnic at New Washington might have revolutionized you," was his coarse reply.

"Oh, God, let me hate him!" again swept through my mind, even as despair tore my body when he turned to the door.

But again he approached me. His caustic tone left him, and once more he spoke in the rich, deep note of the lover that he can put on and off. "Missy, I love you, and I want you; and I shall wait until you send for me. You will."

Even after he had swaggered out, and I saw him swagger, the other side of me would have kept him a little bit longer had he cared to stay.

## VIII

I WAS in Mr. Rafferty's office this afternoon. He asked me to come that I might see the view from the top of the hill, and I had gone because it gave me a sense of importance to be admitted where so many vainly knock. I was quite afraid at first, for there were lines of officials to pass, and each one turned upon me belligerently as I asked for their chief, then took the cigars out of their



mouths when I mentioned my name and escorted me along.

I felt taller than usual and walked elegantly. The girl at the telephone desk turned around and smiled, and I nodded back, for her employer had given orders that whenever I called up he was to be summoned.

Mr. Rafferty was raging over the 'phone when a clerk showed me in. "Don't get gay with me, young man," he was saying, "and stow yer gab till I'm through. Yu'll do this my way or—" He looked up as I stood in the doorway, smiled, growled at the 'phone again, then, with a shout to make up for his weakening, told the offender to do as he pleased—he had no time to bother—and hung up the receiver.

"Look out of the window there," he said, pushing me along. "Get a little of God's sunlight into yu this day. Yu can stand it. Saints above, what a skin!"

I looked down upon Boston blanketed in snow, so pure and impure, which I shall always love for the joy and the misery it has given me. "Which way is Cambridge?" I asked.

He waved his hand toward the right, and then eyed me suspiciously as I looked across the strip of river toward Van's rooms. "Say, yu ain't stuck on one of them Harvard babies, are yu?" he demanded.

I shook my head. "I like older men."

He put a big hand on my shoulder. "Do yu like me, dearie?" I was about to deny it, but he stopped me. "Don't answer," he shouted; "I'll not be insulted in my own office."

He placed a chair in the sun for me. "Sit there, and let it pour down on yu; yu're a skinny little bantam." This was his idea of a compliment and I didn't mind.

He asked me about my work at school. He was always deeply interested, and very indignant when he thought I was slighted, wishing to send out his men and "break" someone immediately.

It is strange how I have continued the routine of my school life. Are we all doing the same thing? Do we all go on keeping calm outside with such a tumult of unrest inside? I am just as ordinary

as are the other girls outside—just as absorbed in my studies. But there is no longer any reason back of it all. And when I am tired physically I am immediately depressed. "To what good?" comes into my mind.

I tried to explain this to Mr. Rafferty. "I get awfully blue. I fear sometimes I am going to be a failure."

"No, yu ain't," he protested, "not if there's any power in yu. Perhaps you're not directed right. I was looked upon as the village good-for-nothing when I was a kid, but I was just storin' up my strength, lookin' fer a chance. It came—in the hold of a ship. When I struck America I began to work."

"I don't seem to strike anything at all."

"Yu don't? I suppose I'm nothin' but thin air!"

No matter what we were talking about, Mr. Rafferty always got back to what he was after. I suppose that is power well directed.

I sighed. I had been over this before—but it no longer made me ashamed.

"You're married," I began.

"What's that got to do with lovin'?"

"A man can only love one of them."

"Wrong; he can love two of 'em."

"But one of them will have to suffer."

He hesitated, then slowly, as though playing at cards and uncertain of his game: "If that's what's worrying yu, I'll never let my wife suffer, rest assured."

A wave of indignation swept over me, and then another of horror at this indignation. In a few weeks I had so readjusted my viewpoint that my instinctive sympathies were for the woman who wasn't married. I was, for the moment, angry that, in the event of my caring for Mr. Rafferty, he would in every first instance, protect his wife.

"Oh, it's too horrible, too horrible!" I cried out, covering my face with my hands. He came over and pulled them awkwardly away.

"You're white," he exclaimed. "Have a little nip, eh?"

"No, no, I don't want anything. It isn't that."

"What's horrible to you?"

"Everything. My being here at all, and my permitting you to talk for a moment of the possibility of our caring for each other."

He caught the cloth of my coat sleeve between his fingers and worried it a little. "Say, couldn't yu care?" he pursued. The recognition of the crumbling of my moral fiber didn't disturb him in the least.

"You've asked me that a hundred times, until I've tried to avoid you; and I would *never* see you—only I get lonesome. The thing that is dreadful is this: a year ago I ran away when a man I loved talked as boldly as you do. Now I argue this out with you. It's just like creeping paralysis."

He disregarded the creeping paralysis. His face was ugly. "Do you love that fellow yet?" he growled.

"Yes," I replied.

"All stuff," he retorted. He wouldn't entertain it for a moment. What he did not wish to believe did not exist. "It's just fellows like that—puppy loves—that I'm trying to save yu from. I'm the man for yu."

"But I'm a young girl," I answered. I felt the tears back of my voice. It seemed so loathsome that I should be screaming aloud the little goodness that remained in me. "I'm not yet eighteen. Wouldn't it be a sin against your soul if you made me love you?"

He would hear nothing that impeded him. "Don't tangle me up with such vexatious questions. You're a little slip of a thing, and you're the kind ut needs protectin'. I tell you, tiny, yu need me."

I walked out of the bright light into a darker corner of the room. "I need someone, something, to set me straight with the world, but a married man can't do it."

He followed me and pawed at my shoulder. "You're speakin' through tears, dearie, and yer eyes are full of mist. That's the first encouragement Rafferty's ever received from yu." His voice was husky.

I shrugged off his hand. He was only dangerous in that he was now offering, in this queer left-handed fashion, what I felt the need of.

"I don't like to see yu goin' round the world all alone, darlin'," he continued, "and shakin' yer pretty feet fer a little money. This struggle fer bread will be too hard fer yu. Some kind of girls can do it, but not your kind. I want yu to do yer work, if it's yer work, but not with starvation starin' yu in the face till all the baby curves take fright from its ugly mug and run away forever."

I turned away from him and the tears fell down on my shabby muff. "I sha'n't boast any more of my being still pretty good, because that doesn't seem to have any weight with you, but—"

"Saints alive!" he interrupted. "It's because yu *are* good that I want to keep yu so. You're not fer the crowd."

"No," I breathed. For the first instant in my life I was really tempted, and by a married man whom I didn't love.

He saw my wavering and followed it up. "I don't say that what I'm offerin' yu is the thing to offer a young girl, but takin' it all in all, knowin' yu as I do, it's the best solution fer yu. You ain't strong, and I can give yu comforts—"

"Oh, stop it, stop it!" I moaned. "Don't try to tempt me with luxuries. It's a waste and it's useless. I don't love you, you're married. I wouldn't hurt any woman."

He was quiet for so long that I turned from my corner to look at him. His jaw was working vindictively. "You force it out of me," he finally said. The perspiration was on his forehead. "I never thought to tell any man or woman, but—yu can't hurt her. She don't like me. She don't want me to come around her. She's high-toned."

It did not occur to me that I was deeply concerned in the situation until he moved toward me, peering out from under his red, shaggy eyebrows while his humiliation gave place to the joy of the struggle.

"Now, girl," he said, "you've heard my bitter shame, and yu know there's nothin' in this wide world to keep us apart. Nothin' real, nothin' that counts. Laws were made fer the lawless; we ain't that."

He went on. I was entirely hedged

about. My brain grew very simple. It seemed to be grasping nothing but what would occur to sheep as they were being driven into the fold. "Into the fold"—that thought had come to me somewhere before. Mr. Rafferty's voice was ceaseless now. His words guided me to the right or the left like the pressure of a dog's flanks against the flock. Only the gist of his arguments made any impression on me.

"Young girl . . . country prejudices . . . sound ones, too . . . when overcome . . . those girls go quickest . . . yu ought to have a mother . . . but yu haven't . . . you're too pretty, too soft . . . I'm not out soul savin', but I'm offerin' you a harbor . . . you could do worse . . . I know the world . . . only the shrewd can fight it . . . with my arms round you . . . anything you've suffered you'll forget . . . I'm not deceivin' you . . . it ain't the best I'm offerin' you . . . the best I have to offer . . . all your life I'm yours—all my life, rather . . . enough income afterward, to keep you from—from goin' on . . . you'll be happy—happy just to have it settled . . . no more battles—peace."

My brain grew thicker, more tranquil. The gates of the curious fold were opened wide for the sheep to pass within. It was very still. I was very still. A man put his face down to mine, put his lips close to mine. He was just a man, a stranger. By chance his name was Rafferty. I pushed away from him; my arms were strong. I spoke to him; my mind was clear.

"I should die if you kissed me!"

I moved toward the door. He endeavored to intercept me, but he was clumsy and I was alive. As I stepped into the outer office a clerk stood as though about to knock, with telegrams in his hand. There was no opportunity for further words. I think I said good-bye, but Mr. Rafferty was not the man for social exigencies. The Boss roared in his retainer as I passed out.

## IX

I'LL try for another week. I'll keep sending back Mr. Rafferty's flowers and

his theater tickets; I sha'n't answer his notes. I'll not look for Van as I pass along the streets. I sha'n't go to hear music which tears me to pieces. No, I shall do none of these things. Instead, I shall sit downstairs in the rocker and refine myself still further by listening to Mrs. Short talk of her lodgers.

I know all about Miss Mercy's going West, and why she came back. I came into her room one night when she was labeling little boxes of trinkets and sealing them up in a larger box. "They are for my nephews and nieces when I am gone," she explained.

I asked her why she didn't return West where she had been so happy. Then she told me that he had grown very poor. She did without everything for years so that she could just stay on and see him now and then, but of late there hadn't been enough money for her and his wife, too, so she came East that she might not deny his family what rightfully belonged to them.

I am glad Miss Mercy is different from the other women in this house. It proves that I need not be like them, either. I mean I could be different if I were not as I am now. But I mustn't talk about this. I mustn't write down the thoughts that are in my head, for when thoughts are written down they begin to live.

The doorbell has clanged, and my heart turns over at the sound like a sick woman in her bed.

## X

THEODORA has another plan for me. If I get out and do something I can crowd out the sorrow in my life, and after a while I shall be so hard worked that I'll forget all about it. "Work," said Theodora, looking bouncing and vigorous, "eternal work is the thing—until you ask for nothing in life but a bed to tumble in."

"How shall I get it?" I asked.

"Go ask the president, and go register with all the entertainment bureaus. But the main thing is to keep wishing it. I honestly believe this: if you're in real

distress, if you really want something to take the place of this ridiculous infatuation for this unworthy man, it will come. I've been reading some books and I'm just full of maxims, so I know what I'm talking about."

"Haven't I already tried?"

"You've tried one form of emotional excitement for another, and it was wrong. Now let us try this. I sha'n't go to luncheon today. I'll go around with you to the bureaux."

So I put on my best clothes and we went to the offices. When I reached the desk I hadn't much to say for myself. I had no diploma and no experience, and all they could vaguely promise me was a trial performance where I wouldn't receive any money. The only definite thing was the fee. Still I was glad to pay that, for it seemed respectable, and it gave me an opportunity of going in and asking, "Anything today?" as I heard a number of girls doing. I would never know until I got there whether or not there *was* "anything today," and that would keep me interested.

The president still demurred over presenting me so soon. "There is plenty of time in the spring," he said, "when I can arrange a charming *début* for you—your Greek dances, you know—before the right kind of people."

But I have done as Theodora told me. All week I have kept waiting for the opportunity, watching for it, willing it to come. And it has come, even sooner than I had hoped. I don't think I had actually expected it. I wondered immediately if I could have made Van come to see me had I tried this "willing," as outlined by Theodora. It seems a great waste of power to have willed myself to be an entertainer when I might have brought Van to see me by the same effort.

Still I was very glad when Sarah ushered a colored girl into my room just an hour ago. The colored girl said she had come for the young lady who entertained. Mrs. Short and Miss Mercy were having dinner out with Jimmy's sister's plumber, and that is the reason Sarah was being mistress of ceremonies.

She was gesticulating wildly behind

the maid's back as she was speaking. It was as evident to her as to me that the girl had been sent for Pearl, but both Mrs. Reed and her daughter had gone to Lowell for the night, and of course if the entertaining must be done that evening it would be robbing no one if I took her place.

The servant kept staring at me stupidly with no information whatever save that I need not take dinner at home, and to be sure to be there by eight. She gave me the address. It was in a nice street, not far away. I could walk there even in my cream wool *crêpe*.

When she went away I began dressing immediately, although it was but six then. It's only seven now, and I am writing because I have half an hour to kill before I start. I am so happy. I'm going to do something worth while. I'm going to start my real fight for existence. As soon as I begin on my work I shall be doing the world's work. I can buy my own necessities—yes, even comforts—from now on probably. I shall never have to depend upon a man who emphasizes the weakness of my physical being that he may profit by the weakness of my moral being.

I feel that I have done the moral side of me an injustice. The bad side of me can't be the stronger side, or I should have continued attracting evil, not good. By my just wanting it, and needing it very much, a way is found for me to keep busy—and forget. I pause for one moment, for I am not sure that I want to forget—entirely—though I wish I wanted to. And to be honest, if I could just choose between seeing Van tonight and "entertaining," I am afraid I would still want him.

I must go now. The glass globe is going round, and the ruby ray which I call Van tries to stain my bosom with its flood of color, but I have illuminated the room, and the fires fight each other. I have been too long in the dark. I must try to "bloom up into the light."

## XI

I HAVE sent for Van. I posted the letter after I returned from—from the

house of entertainment. This morning I went to school just the same—the outside of me smiling with the rest of the girls. But there was a great driving noise within, a great hammering. I finally decided it was my soul making a coffin for the good that is left in me.

There is no use for that any more; there never has been any use. Goodness attracts goodness, so I must be very bad indeed, or I should not have attracted the house of entertainment. And all the time I thought that I was "willing" some wonderful way of being happy and good both.

It was a nice place, with those shining plate glass windows which give one something to live up to. A maid was just pulling down the shades as I rang, and I could see the Boston fern which ornamented the bow window and, farther back, the glow of a coal fire. There was only a light in the hall.

I didn't get any farther than the hall. The girl let me in and left me standing there for some time. I kept saying over to myself the things I could recite and a few songs I might sing, and I had bought music in case someone could play for me to dance. The hostess came down the stairs. She was gray-haired and very simply gowned. My crêpe was quite dressy in comparison.

She kept looking down over her gold-rimmed spectacles as she descended in an attempt to see, but when she reached me her glasses came to her aid. "Why, you're not the girl!" she exclaimed. Her voice was pleasant but practical, like Mrs. Short's.

"No, I'm not," I said, trying to make my lips smile, "but I hope I shall answer. Miss Reed is out of town for the night."

The woman looked at me in the utmost consternation. I thought she was appalled because her party would be spoiled by not having Pearl.

"The colored maid was shown to my room," I added hastily, "and I thought I might do. I can sing and recite and dance a little."

"But, my dear child, you won't do at all," she cried, as though the Judgment Day had arrived.

I was terribly disappointed. I thought I ought to "will it" harder perhaps. "Won't you try me? I'm not so terrible," I asked, endeavoring to make my pleading a sort of a joke. "I've been studying in school here, and I should like to make a little money."

She looked at me curiously for a second; a sort of whimsical smile twisted her lips. "It's too ridiculous," she said.

I was too bewildered to argue further. "I'm sorry," was all I could mutter.

"Well, I'm sorrier than you are. Sorry that you came up here, I mean. I'll kill that darkey." My hand was on the doorknob. "Wait," she commanded. She extinguished the light in the hall, then opened the door for me. "Now run down quickly. It's too bad—the whole occurrence."

"Good-bye," I choked out.

"Good-bye," she replied through a crack in the door.

I was glad that I hadn't taken a cab. My little purse felt very flat as I clutched it in my muff. I was rather faint, for we usually have dinner at half past six. I stumbled along the streets where a few minutes before I could scarcely keep my feet on the earth. I didn't understand any of it except that I wasn't wanted. I wasn't even as much wanted in life as Pearl.

When I neared the house I saw a woman running toward me. Her long coat was unfastened and flying in the wind. When she came nearer I saw that it was Miss Mercy's sealskin—that it was Miss Mercy.

"Has anything happened?" I called to her.

She couldn't speak for a moment. Her poor breath was all gone. She clung to me, yet I seemed to be clinging to her. The red stood out on her cheeks.

"How long—how long were you there?" she finally panted out.

"Not two minutes," I replied.

"Thank God—oh, thank God!"

We walked on to the house with our arms linked. She was breathing so heavily I dared not ask her the cause of her anxiety. The front door was open and Mrs. Short stood in the hall, peering out, with her wraps all awry. "You're there,

my dear? You're there?" she greeted me.

"Of course I am," I replied with an effort at cheeriness. "She wouldn't have me. Did Sarah tell you?"

"Oh, miss!" came a sobbing wail from the top of the basement steps. Sarah was there with her apron to her eyes.

"Shut that noise, and go get Miss Robinson some supper," snapped Mrs. Short. "You've made trouble enough."

Miss Mercy led the way upstairs and into my room. The gas was out. I sank into the big chair. The colors of the globe were drenching me with all the hues of life as they swept around.

"Tell me what all this means," I said to her. She stood by my side.

"It's nothing to be unhappy about. It's really a subject for congratulation."

"What sort of a house is that?"

She paused for a moment. "It's a bad sort," she then admitted. "That woman entertains wealthy men lavishly there, and sends for obliging young girls."

"Is that the way Pearl Reed makes money?"

"Yes."

My mind groped in the thick dark. "I see. So one can't make all that money entertaining?"

"I doubt it."

"Not even if a girl 'wills' to?"

"What?"

I let that go, and groped on. Miss Mercy still stood smoothing my hair. My hands were clenched in my lap. "Does her mother know?"

"No; she's blind. We found it out several weeks ago—Mrs. Short and I."

"I suppose poor old Sarah wanted to help me."

"She hadn't an inkling of the truth. When we came home and found where you had gone I started to run after you."

"Why run?"

"I was afraid you might be trapped into staying."

Trapped! I pored over the word. Driven and driven and driven into a corner, and then the slapping of steel. Was that to be the end of me?

"But it's all ended splendidly," encouraged Miss Mercy.

"It's all ended, anyway," I concluded. My hands grew lax.

So this was the result of my efforts to attract goodness! This was my way out—my solution—my clever avoidance of greater danger! This was the best that could be done for me: a house where men met girls, young girls like myself, if the party was to be pleasing!

And who stood by me and protected me? Women whom the world, the Back Bay world, shrink from. They are my friends, my instinctive friends—the only ones who put their arms around me. They are my kind, and I am going to be one of them.

There's only one way of escape worse than this, and that is to turn to Van. I love him and I can cling to him, and I will be invulnerable to all but him. I shall be set apart. He will sometimes make me miserable—that is the first way he made me happy—but it is not what I shall be to him that will count, but what he will be to me. I just don't know any better way.

I wrote the note and mailed it. And, as I said, today I went to school and smiled while the coffin for my good side was being put together with a great roaring noise.

When I came home this afternoon the room was full of pale pink roses, and a note from Van said that he would send for me at six, so that we might dine in his rooms—as that would be better—"and I shall kneel at your feet with my head buried in the hem of your little frock."

## XII

I HEARD the wheels of the cab squeak in the bitter cold as the driver turned around. He had driven past at first, as they all do, for the house is small and wedged in. Then the noise of scrunching the snow ceased, and, after thirty-one counts, the doorbell clanged. I noticed that it made no difference with my heart. I lay with my face down on the couch.

When the front door was opened I could feel the cold wind shaking my own door, but I wasn't cold or warm or any-



thing—I was just lying there. My arms were hanging down limp on either side. One arm seemed to be longer than the other, for it could touch the carpet. I thought about that—but perhaps I was more on one side than the other.

The cabby didn't want to leave even after Miss Mercy told him I wasn't going, and had given him my note to Van. I don't know what they said. She finally persuaded him. "Hold up," he said to the horse, and then "Get up." The scrunching and screeching commenced, but after forty-five counts the sounds had died away.

Nothing happened for a long time. I realized that I was crushing my cream wool crêpe, but it didn't make any difference. I got up and undressed, then I let down the folding bed and crawled in between the cold sheets.

Miss Mercy came up with some broth, but I was so tired from undressing that I couldn't lift my head to take any. She fed me a little with a spoon. She was deeply concerned. "It's the shock of last night's experience reacting upon you," she said. "I'm so glad you let me send the driver away. This is no night for parties."

I wanted to encourage her in the belief that it was last night that prevented me from going away in the cab tonight, but I couldn't say anything. Miss Mercy will never know that it was she who kept me from going away in the cab. I wondered if I would thank her when I was an old woman. I wondered if Miss Mercy's saving me would be her own salvation when the time came for her to feel along the dark passage to the light.

I lay between the cold sheets until the globe stopped whirling, and went out. I had never known it to do that before, so I felt that it was late. The cars went by seldom. Everything seemed to be suspended for a while.

I didn't think much of Van because there wasn't any use in doing it. There *really* wasn't any use. I knew that, for the first time, I had actually given him up. I couldn't plan for what was to come. I didn't "will" anything. I lay in the bed and left the rest of my life to some other power than myself. Set

phrases kept recurring to me. I addressed the imaginary power. "You must manage now—I'm beaten. I'll do anything I'm told to do—you must tell me—I don't know—I don't know."

After a while Miss Mercy began coughing. Then I knew it was going to be morning. I was very cold. She had left a little glass of her cordial on a chair by my bedside, and with an effort I reached for it and sipped it. It was very strong. I saw her drink a goblet of it in the afternoon when I went to ask her to fasten up my gown. Her skin grew warmer after she had taken it. She laughed at my being all dressed up; she said I must be going out with my young man. She talked very freely.

"There's trouble in the house," she informed me, as she began with the little hooks and eyes at my neck.

"Is there?" But I wasn't thinking of the trouble in the house.

"Yes," she chattered on. "Mrs. Belstone's friend met Mrs. Edson in the hall and stopped to talk with her a moment. It seems that he had met her somewhere. Belstone was hanging over the banisters 'unbeknownst,' and she came down to make her first call upon Mrs. Edson."

"It's too bad," I responded, not wanting to be prim, but feeling embarrassed for her. "Mrs. Edson isn't like Mrs. Belstone."

"No-o," with her fingers tugging at the belt, "not exactly the same." She laughed a little craftily. "Magdalen wasn't like Messalina, nor is an evil woman of society like a *nymphe du pave*; but did it ever occur to you that the beginning is just the same? Every woman has a different *reason* for taking the step, but the method of sinning remains as common as dirt."

I was facing the door. She hadn't finished at the belt, but I walked out of the room without turning around. If she had taken a sharp nail and driven it into my brain, the acute consciousness of this idea could not have given me greater pain. Thoughts which had no form, mere words, came into my mind. No, they were not thoughts, they were not words. They were just pictures. Horrible pictures. Ugly pictures. All of us

alike—all of us alike! An order! An initiated order!

"But this is too hideous!" my breath racked out. "This is too hideous—there's got to be an escape! All my life I can't see these pictures—but the cab's coming at six—it's almost six. When a cab comes I'll have to take it, won't I? Why can I not take a cab when it's sent for me? Oh, why do I talk so much about cabs? That isn't the thing; the thing is—the thing is—" I crouched down and made myself very small so that I could think minutely of what I must do. My brain went to a tiny point, and that point—somehow—made it plain to my hands and to my feet that I must cross the room and write a note. And I crossed the room and I wrote the note: "I am never coming. Now I know." Then my feet carried me over to the couch with the sealed and addressed envelope in my hand. There I dropped.

Miss Mercy found me. The cordial had swept through her like a flame, leaving her spent and wan again. I found out, after a while, that she had come in to beg forgiveness for the roughness of her words to me—"a child." I watched her curiously through my returning from the haze of oblivion. While my savior, she had crucified me. Who employs the emissaries of knowledge? Who sends these strange messengers? A consumptive who drank from exhaustion had, by her coarseness, driven the nails of agonizing truth into my body and spirit.

The dawn came slowly. The appeal of my soul went on. "I'm beaten; you must manage now—you, whatever you are—you power. I'll do anything I'm told; you must tell me—I don't know—I don't know!"

When I heard Jimmy raking the furnace fire I rose and watched the lamp-lighter hurrying along. The yellowish circle around each post resolved itself into the spread of purplish snow as the light winked out.

My night was over.

### XIII

I HAVEN'T gone about as yet. I feel like a tree that has been hollowed out. I

am not at all in despair. I lie quietly. But I can't manage any more—only, I'll do anything, anything.

A thick letter came from Van. I fingered it a little. I could imagine the cruel words that must have filled the pages. Then I sent it back. The simpler way would have been to have torn it up and not answered, but that would not have impressed Van. He is not simple.

Several of the girls have been to see me. These are the only times that my eyes grow misty. I cling to them, and don't want them to go away. Theodora came, too. She was delighted that I was not despairing. My "willing" myself into that house was quite a blow to her. She doesn't know about the rest.

"Something will happen," I assured her, "but I sha'n't have anything to do with it."

Theodora was so afraid that it would be Mr. Rafferty's turn to happen that she went downtown and warned him to leave me alone. I accused her of it and she didn't deny what she had done. This was brave in Theodora, for it might have cost her her situation; and he did bellow at her terribly, she said.

Also she stopped to see the president of the school. "He is very concerned over your staying away," she related. "He says he wants you down there on Monday for a particular reason."

Little flickers of interest crept through my torpid being. It was like getting well from a sickness and hearing the crisp rustling of the leaves of the first tulips. "For a particular reason" kept recurring to me all day Sunday.

This is chapter thirteen. It's just an interlude. Thirteen is a number without character.

### XIV

"PERHAPS it's come," I said to myself when the president sent for me. I didn't know what I meant by "it." It had, though.

Two ladies were in the office with the president. They wore quiet tailor suits, but it was no trouble to tell where they

lived. I had on my old sailor blouse, but I realized that they didn't care.

"Such a mite!" exclaimed one, holding me by the hand.

"Are you quite strong, my dear?" asked the other.

The president and I assured her that I was very strong. The reason for their coming developed: there were to be some dances for charity in February, and they wanted a *danseuse*, a *première danseuse*. That was me! I was to be paid for it, and perhaps it was to lead to my getting classes next year when I had graduated.

I kept putting my head on one side and then on the other, and smiling. I could think of hardly anything to say, but when they began to talk of the kind of dances, and wanted a sort of kirmess, I pulled my chair right up to them and exclaimed, without thinking:

"Oh, no, not at all. That would not be original. Let us have a revival of Greek dances."

They both laughed at my positiveness, and the president "tut-tutted," but I rushed on because I was full of my subject. I explained how I had been studying the figures on the friezes and urns in the museum, and had turned the posturing into dance steps. "I'd like to show you," I said.

"Let her come to my house at five," said one of the ladies as they rose to go. "The committee meets at half after four, and it will be an excellent opportunity. We can decide then and there."

"Yes, that would do, Kathie," coincided the other one. "You can use your ballroom."

I didn't faint when she said "ballroom." I felt that there couldn't be any room too beautiful for my Greek dances, but all the time I was wondering if my cheesecloth costume was clean enough.

Nothing frightened me until the man servant opened the door of the house. He wanted me to go away because Mrs. Abbott (the one I had met) was with a committee. I hated him and I was in terror of him, but I was firm. Finally Mrs. Abbott came from the parlor, and after that he had to carry my bag to the dressing room off the ballroom.

Mrs. Abbott brought me in a cup of tea herself, and when she saw that I was ready she summoned the others to the rear of the house where the ballroom was. I could hear them laughing softly as they came along, all speaking simply because they had no one to ape, being the ones that are aped themselves.

The accompanist struck the first bar of music before it came to me that I was going out before a lot of people and there would be the eyes, which I had always feared, boring holes in me. To aid my success I wondered if I had better think of Van as I had done before. Yet I dismissed that impatiently. I felt that Van was one of the kind who would do the staring.

As I finished each dance, they didn't applaud at all, but soberly discussed the novelty of the idea. One of the men always rose and gave me a chair when I came forward to talk with them, and one of the women threw her fur wrap around me. "We must keep her in condition," she said. It was all such a business with them that I wasn't at all shy in my scant costume. I felt surrounded, hedged about, but happily so. When I was ready for the street, one of the committee, who had lingered to chat, came out into the hall with Mrs. Abbott.

"I'll have the butler put you on a car," my hostess said.

"I know the way," I answered, not understanding.

"Yes, but it's so late for a young girl to be out alone," she asserted.

I was too astonished to reply. It was only seven.

"I'll put her down, Kathie," the other one offered. "My carriage is here."

There was nothing to be said. Even after I gave her my address she drove me all the way home. I suppose when a woman is sure of herself she can take chances. As we neared the house I saw Van coming down the steps and swinging toward us. I shrank back as far as I could, for I didn't want him to see me, but he never thought of looking into a private carriage.

I was very weak in the knees, but it was because I was glad I had missed him, not because I hadn't. The appreciation

of this made me dizzy. It was like deep breathing after a long stinting of my lungs.

Mrs. Short, who had seen me drive up as she was looking from the parlor window, wasn't at all cross about my being late to dinner. "And Mr. Ruyme's been waiting for an hour," she informed me, as though wonders would never cease.

"Mrs. Short," I said to her, "I'm not going to see Mr. Ruyme any more. Will you say that if he ever calls again?"

She sat down suddenly. "Well, that's right, my dear. Although he's a fascinating fellow, he wouldn't fit in with that." She waved her hand toward the window where she had viewed the brougham.

"He won't fit in with my work, that's the reason," I answered importantly.

It was not until I reached my room and threw myself in the big chair where so many people have loved so many people that the glory of it overcame me. Tears were on my cheeks, but they were cool; they didn't burn me. I was alone in the big chair, and I was glad of it. Through my sobs I cried: "I didn't want to see him! I didn't even want to see him!"

The big chair, in all its experience at Mrs. Short's house, had never seen anything like that before.

## XV

Now comes fear! And I know there is no escaping it. When one wants to work well, fear must be the goad.

I am harassed with the knowledge that in duty bound I must succeed. The sense of responsibility is like a shroud about me. Once I tried to discover if it would make any difference if I alone were bad—since the others would be capable.

"That would simply spoil it all," said Mrs. Abbott brightly.

"She's only fishing," added another, thinking to be kind.

"You're not going to fail us?" asked an old gentleman, shaking his finger at me.

"No, no!" I cried. Fail them! Fail

myself! This was my opportunity. It had been given me. I must not let it slip.

I stayed in Boston through the holidays that we might rehearse daily. I am always there promptly, but the amateurs are continually being absent altogether—having a sore throat or keeping a luncheon engagement.

Sometimes when I come home late from rehearsal, on the days that most of the girls have gone to luncheons, I grow very despondent, and feel that all this excitement which has crowded out everything else in my life is only of the moment; that a substance more solid than these pirouettings must take the place of the realities in my life if the realities are to go forever. Yet pirouetting can't be entirely froth or why should I be so afraid of it? There is something back of this.

## XVI

MISS MERCY is very ill. She has gone to her sisters in the country. I wake up toward morning because the silence of her not coughing is so ringing.

A new fear came to me: what if Miss Mercy died on the day of the Greek dances? I wondered how I could appear, and how I could explain to the committee if I didn't. I excused myself for the first time from rehearsal, and went out to see her. I wanted to go, but I was ashamed of myself, too. I had seen a picture just that morning of a young woman propitiating a god.

It was very cold, but the wind doesn't go up and down streets in the country; it flies everywhere, and one doesn't mind so much. The snow scrunched under my feet as the wheels of the cab did when it came for me that night. Sounds always bring back miseries to me. They are the echoes.

The cab coming for me seems a long time ago. Van and I haven't met since, although he tries to see me more than he did before. He sent Mrs. Short a pretty pin for "past kindnesses," and she accepted it with delight; but when he called again she still insisted that I

wasn't at home. She was wearing the pin, too.

The reviewing of these events brought me to the door of the house where Miss Mercy lay sick. I had intended to give the whole pilgrimage to dwelling upon her—instead, I had been thinking of Van, of the dances, of my future after the dances. I cried on the doorstep a little before I knocked. I was just as cruel as life. I *was* life. She was in the reckoning only that she might die at the wrong time.

In a passion of regret I hung about her bed to prove that I loved her. I even spoke of it, and that is hard for a Yankee to do. "You saved me from a terrible unhappiness," I said, "and I want you to know it." She smiled with joy. "You have been my guiding star," I went on. Of course she hadn't—absolutely. It was *not* wanting to be like her, and all the rest of them, that had saved me. Still I'm glad I told her, but it's strange what chances we take with a dying person when we know they'll see perfectly how things stand in just a little space of time.

## XVII

I HAVE seen Van again. Yesterday was the day of the dress rehearsal. We began early in the morning and didn't leave until five in the afternoon. Everything went wrong. The auditorium was cold and unpeopled save by anxious individuals making poor suggestions, who only served to emphasize the emptiness of the place. All my early terrors seized me. I felt enormously alone and futile. Every empty seat sneered at me, and I thought I heard laughter among the scattered members of the charity organization. Once or twice I faltered, and my own ballet mistress, as well as the one who arranged the ensemble dances, spoke to me sharply.

Almost everyone had gone when I was ready to leave. I had a number of costumes, and I remained to see that they were properly hung up in my dressing room. Then I started out alone. My legs ached fearfully. I wanted to take a cab, but I didn't feel that I should spend

the money, so I leaned against the iron post as I waited for a car.

My future was very black. I had chosen dancing for my profession—a light, airy work I had called it—and it wasn't airy at all. It was a profession weighed with tremendous responsibility, and in exchange for an hour of flitting about were hours, weeks, months, years of the most exhausting labor. But it was not the prospect of the work that was appalling to me, but the fear that all my efforts were for nothing. I had simply mistaken my talents.

I could not believe this, however. I stamped my heel in the snow and reviled those cold, correct people who had ignored me during the rehearsal. But the fire against them could not remain burning long. I was too fatigued for maledictions. I propped myself up against the iron post once more, and prayed for nothing but a car to take me home. After a little I was conscious that a man stood by me, also waiting. He was not long breaking the silence.

"Why the deuce don't you take a cab?" he said contemptuously. It was Van.

"I don't want one. I'm not tired." That was our meeting.

He didn't say anything more, but hailed a cab from across the street. I refused to accept it, but he insisted harshly. The driver looked around in surprise and I got in. He knew I was one of the young ladies dancing for a fashionable charity. More than that, I was afraid someone might come from the hall and see us wrangling.

"Drive on," Van said, seating himself beside me. The horse floundered out of the snowdrift and went on down Boylston Street.

I was silent. Why had Van come when I was so broken? He had no reproaches for me; perhaps they died on his lips, as mine had always done when I saw him after a long interval. Yet it seemed impossible that our positions could be reversed.

"You look tired, Missy," he said gently. He started to put his arm around me.

I resisted him. "I'm not tired at all.

Please give the man my address, Van; I want to get home."

"Wouldn't you like to come out and have dinner with me? The drive will do you good."

"No, I don't care to, thank you."

He lowered the window and gave my address. The cabby controlled his surprise and turned his horse's head toward the dividing bridge.

"Then I will go with you," said Van stubbornly.

"No, no!"

"Why not?"

"I don't want to see you."

"Can't you trust yourself?"

"Yes, I can," I cried in defiance.

"Prove it by letting me come up."

I felt helpless, but more from physical weakness than any moral oozing of my courage. "I can't talk with you to-night."

"When can you?"

"Why, never."

"Nonsense. Everything has to shape itself—have a definite end. This affair of ours has been hanging long enough."

"You're wrong," I insisted. "It's already finished—done, done, done with."

"Do you think that this society dancing stunt is going to take the place of anything big in your life?"

He made my weak attempts seem just as immature as I myself was feeling them to be. But I tried to be proud. "I think it's the beginning," I contended.

"Rot! You're not a dancer."

"Who told you that?" I must have screamed, for someone on the pavement looked in at us. What if that was the gossip of the club! What if I really was a failure!

"I'm not talking," he answered, "but I know as well as you do how you got the job."

"How?" I asked, confused and curious.

"Don't play such a tiny baby. I heard weeks ago how these women went to Rafferty to arrange for the hall—which he owns—and he offered them the whole place for nothing if they engaged you as the solo dancer."

I peered at him through the gloom.

"Is that really the truth? Really, oh, Van, really?"

He peered back at me. "Do you mean to say you didn't know?"

"I've never lied to you, Van. I didn't know."

"That's right; you've never lied." There was a silence. "Well, how do you and Rafferty stand, then?" He had to repeat his question, for I wasn't listening to him. "Come now, Missy, let's have the whole truth."

"I'm not thinking about Rafferty," I said after his prodding. "I don't know anything about him."

I was thinking of something much more vital. If Mr. Rafferty secured this appearance for me, then, after all, I really might not be a good dancer. And if I wasn't a good dancer, then I had not got on at all. I was nowhere—I was just nowhere. I put my hand to my head with a moan.

Instantly Van responded to my weakness. "Missy, darling, let me rest you. Dance your little head off if you want to, sweetheart, but don't dance your little heart out."

I beat him off. "It's my head and my heart and my soul that are in this dancing, or that ought to be. It's all I have, and I thought it was given to me as a beautiful gift. Why, if I'm wrong—if I'm wrong—" It was too unspeakable.

The cab drew up in front of the door and stopped. Van held me back as I struggled to get out. "You can go; don't be scared. But on the day after the performance I'm coming to hear how it's all turned out. Perhaps you'll be ready for me, then, 'if you're wrong.' And don't you turn me away or I'll break your bally door down. I'll be there at four."

So that's the way it stands, and to-morrow night I'm to pay for the hall—and be suffered to dance.

## XVIII

IT must be two in the morning. Jimmy kept the furnace fire up so that I would be warm when I came in. The performance is over. Miss Mercy did die. I



look out of the window and pause before I write anything more, because, right after speaking of her death, I must say something bright and joyous, and it is cruel. But—I can dance! I can dance!

It was dreadful how I learned of Miss Mercy's going away. Mrs. Reed came in and told me as I was starting over to the hall at seven this evening. Mrs. Short puffed up after her, and was furious. "Only a good woman could be as cruel as this," she said to Mrs. Reed. She didn't care if she moved—not at that moment.

I was putting a few things in my little bag—some extra hairpins and an old shawl for the "waits." I went right on collecting them while Mrs. Reed told me about Miss Mercy. She had had a sudden hemorrhage and had cried out: "Not so soon, God." Then after a little she had died.

"Don't let it upset you, my dear," urged Mrs. Short, after she had invited Mrs. Reed from the room. In spite of the death she and Jimmy were going to the performance, and her silk dress rustled anxiously.

"Upset me!" I repeated vaguely. "Why, no, I shall have to go just the same." Miss Mercy's dying had been one of the fears that had hung over me. Now I put it all aside and went on. My dancing was pretty big to *me*, even if it wasn't any good.

"If death doesn't stand in the way of my trying to succeed," I thought as I drove over in the carriage which Mrs. Abbott had sent me, "then I ought to be able to rise above any other condition that tends to drag me down." In this grim way Miss Mercy's dying encouraged me. The poor dear friend, she had lived for others—she had died for them. The pathos of her living, not her death, brought tears to my eyes.

But I found that I could banish them when, arriving at the hall, I began putting on my make-up. They must not spoil my rouge or streak my eyes. Nothing must disturb me. Girls of my age, but younger somehow, were running about in the corridors giggling with excitement. The committee were all giving orders, different ones, to the same

people. The tuning of the instruments added to the chaos, but I would not let the chaos past my door. I felt hardened cement outside and oiled machinery inside.

Theodora, who had come direct from the train, was the only one with me. She was very efficient and wouldn't loan my rouge to anyone. I wanted to ask her about Mr. Rafferty, but I didn't dare for fear what Van said was true. I would have gone down to his office and asked him myself, had not the same dread held me back. It didn't make any difference, anyway. I was there to dance, not to ask how I happened to dance.

"If it means anything to you, Missy," said Theodora as we were called to the stage, "you never looked more efficient, somehow, than you do tonight."

"That means a lot to me," I answered her.

I walked to my place behind the long floral screen at the back. The orchestra rolled up in a volume of sound that went on through my body like the vibrations of a harp.

Theodora was secreted back there with me, for I was to slip quickly from the spring costume that I was wearing to those of summer, autumn and winter, and the changes must be made there. The Dance of the Seasons was to be the first part of the program. The girls didn't change beyond carrying different garlands. We could hear them tittering in the wings as they waited to file on. How they could laugh!

All of a sudden the music grew louder, and Theodora, who was peeking through, whispered, "The curtain's up." The dancers came on from either side. They formed their first picture, and a sound like the bursting of bags reached our ears. "They're applauding," translated Theodora.

I looked through the hedge of flowers for the first time. I had been preparing myself for the great emptiness of the dress rehearsal; now all the space seemed solidly filled; not only the seats but the whole area of the theater was pulsing with people, so wonderfully does humanity pervade space. Far from being afraid of these people, I was delighted that they

were there. Those dots of black and white were much more encouraging than the red backs of unresponsive chairs. Then I realized that I must give no more time to them, but to listen to the measures that I might dance out from the screen exactly on the beat. Waiting was terrible. It was like playing over and over on the G string of the violin.

When I came out there was some hand clapping from the top gallery, and I knew that the girls from the school were there—where I had so often been. It was curious, but the personal enthusiasm didn't help me at all—the moment was too big. After all, a public dancer must win the public. Our friends, I am afraid, will go in a pint cup.

We did the spring dance and it went quite well, although a number of the flowers didn't come up in time, which is the way of plants. One also fell and got stepped on. Instinctively I danced in front of her as she sprawled. With the terrors at seeing her fall came a delight that I needed all the brain I had—and more—for this "pirouetting." The conviction grew as we went on through the seasons that any poor work has to have mind in it. And it is the use of our minds which keeps us sane and good.

By the time we had reached the winter part I found, too, that I was not only responsible for my solo work, but as the soloist and leader I must take care of all the others. The weight of the task almost crushed me at first; then I lifted it—inversely, I clung to it. Here was a task of a lifetime before me. No more moping if I was to be a leader.

The applause was very good when we had finished the first part. I was glad for the girls' sake, but I didn't take a great deal of it to myself. They might be "suffering" me for the use of the hall. I didn't want to speak to any of the committee who were fluttering around. I feared the falseness of their compliments. But I sought my instructor.

"You're all right," she said, "but—"

"You mean the girls?"

"Yes."

"I'm going to lift them up in this Bacchanalian dance. I'm going to soar, and they have to go with me."

"Right," she answered.

I felt, in the Bacchanale, that I could add to the mechanism of the steps some of the spirit which I once thought entirely comprised dancing. It was like dropping oil slowly, certainly, as one makes a salad dressing. But I was sure first of the other ingredients. I slipped through the screen and whirled in a circle around them. "Come on," I cried; "come on!"

I laughed at some, pulled at the costumes of others. One of them thought it was a game of tag and broke her line to follow after me. "Keep your step," I snapped at her.

She retired, but the flame was among us. I doubt if they danced as well, but they danced more successfully. I was working correctly and yet with a semblance of abandon. The thought came to me that our spirit of dancing is like the passions of life: they are to use, but to control if we are to enjoy them. The music grew wilder toward the end. I began to laugh, hoping that the girls would catch the infection. They were in for any kind of fun. They laughed with me and the curtains fell as we rioted—in order and in step.

The applause was tremendous. I was so delighted with the chorus that, after two calls, I slipped away that they might get the glory, but some ran to the wings when the curtain was up and pulled me out. It was like a kiss on the lips to hear the swelling up of appreciation when I came on again.

As I turned to my dressing room for my change Mrs. Abbott followed and put her arms around me. "You are making the success that we were all sure you would," she said. "We were all too occupied yesterday to find time to say so."

So much for self-torture. Yet I looked at her searchingly. "Tell me, please, how did you happen to choose me?"

"We were speaking of that the other night, trying to trace back our good fortune. We have a Mr. Rafferty to thank for it. He suggested you when we came to ask for a permit to give the dance."

"Oh! He owns this hall, doesn't he?"

"Good gracious, no! My husband owns it."

A lump rose up in my throat. Perhaps it was the one that had left my heart. So Van had lied to me!

"I must change," I said suddenly. I wanted to tell her, but there are some things in my life that I can never explain to Mrs. Abbott and her friends. She saw my emotion.

"Not a tear," she warned.

I smiled out of the little cloud. "No, indeed. There is the waltz ahead of me—the real test." I went cheerily back to my business.

The waltz was mine. The chorus came on only at the end. For the first time I was to do it all alone. The little knot of friends could not help me sway that crowd. Nothing but my dancing could do it—"my dancing." I could be proud of it after all; that was my consolation. It would not be my weak self that was to do it—I was glad of that—it was to be the strongest part of me. I loved it. My gift was fighting for my future. If it won, there would be no fear of Vans and Raffertys. "Education is a young girl's armor," the president had said. This was my armor.

When the curtain rose I was coiled up among the flowers on the mossy bank. The music awakened me. When I lifted myself from the flowers the house applauded. They were glad to see me there—the dancer. When I smiled at them, the applause came up in another wave. They were glad to see me there—the woman. "That is where the personality comes in," I told myself, "but art comes first."

The joyous waltz carried me around the stage. I was doing all things. I was counting. I was calculating distances. I was careful of the slippery places on the floor. There was the sway of the body with the sway of the soul to add to my happiness. But the task was not yet done. As I had made the girls swing to my spirit, I must now find that same rhythm in the hearts of the men and women who were watching me. We must be one beating whole. Here must be expended the soul, mind and body.

The music went drifting on. The fre-

quent bursts of applause ceased, but the feeling of success continued. And I understood, for at last they were all dancing with me in their hearts. We were in unison. And yet—and yet—though the harmony was perfect, we were not of one mind at all.

They may have been thinking of their sweethearts, those men out there, of women to be married or of those only to be cared for. Old loves, young loves, loves that never were, may have crossed the mental vision of the women. Rich, sensuous living may have crept into the spirit of the moment, or pure dreams, as exquisite as the music, may have stood to them for desire. Those may have been their fantasies as our hearts were dancing altogether—but they were not mine. It was so splendid. I hadn't any time for dreams. I was just counting, and minding my steps, and trying, by all that I had learned of men and women, to deceive the audience into believing that I, the dancer, was feeling just as they were. And that was my work—forever.

I can't remember the rest. So many calls, bowing, thinking suddenly of Miss Mercy, kissing Theodora wildly, and once seeing Mr. Rafferty clapping noisily as he sat in the very front row. I smiled down at him. He had helped me, and there had been no toll.

Tomorrow—it is now today—I'm to go to the country with Mrs. Abbott for a while—"to talk over plans and rest," she said. But I am to see Van at four this afternoon.

It is very late. This is the time for Miss Mercy to begin coughing. Dear Miss Mercy! I am so full of life, and she is so through with it.

## XIX

WHEN he came in I was almost impatient because I hadn't finished packing. Then I noticed that my heart was fluttering, and I know now that it will flutter for a long time to come whenever I meet him, because he stands for something that makes a great division in my life. Yet I hope that I won't meet him often, if ever again.

I saw him as he passed into the doorway, just as I had seen him when he entered the drawing room at Mrs. Croakes's over a year ago. My vision was not blinded by fondness then or now; his real self was even more clear than at first, for wisdom has come to me. This is his punishment. All that he has taught me has shot back as a boomerang to him, making his faults plain. I saw his ugly mouth and teeth and cold gray eyes; but more than that, I recognized the emptiness of his pompous manner. The very sophistication which association with him had given me showed how poorly he contrasted with other men I have met.

At first there was a fat smile on his face. I could imagine his attack. He was going to be firm with me, but after a little he would make concessions, and when I had suffered sufficiently we would complete arrangements for our continued happiness. He threw himself into the big chair and held out his hand to me. I shook my head and sat on the couch opposite him.

"Not even on the little stool?" he asked, with his brows in that perfect arch.

"I've come to the conclusion that the little stool is uncomfortable."

"I shall never ask you again," he said importantly.

That incident being closed, there was nothing more to say. He went on: "I saw you last night—bully!"

"Thank you, Van."

"It made me want to pick you up and crush you in my arms."

"Did you like my dancing?"

"I wanted to crush you in my arms." But I could see that he was proud of me, and I wondered if he was afraid of me. We talked of the evening.

"You lied to me about Rafferty, Van."

"I quoted the gossip of the club."

"I don't believe it."

He waved the subject aside and became more intense. "You know me; I'd use any method to get the girl I love."

Love! The poor word! How it has suffered up and down the streets of the world!

"You can't ever get me, Van."

"Why not?"

"I don't love you."

He laughed. He had heard women say that before, no doubt. Then he assumed his deep note. "An emotional experience like ours can't die. We've proven that."

"How?"

"I've tried to throw you. You've tried to throw me. Here we are together again."

He endeavored to give an intimacy to the scene which did not exist. I looked at him, feeling sorry for the me which was dead. It would so have enjoyed being here. It would have fed happily for a long time on what had been said already.

"I'm going out in the country with Mrs. Abbott tomorrow. We sha'n't ever be together again probably—you and I."

He threw back his head and exhaled a long, thin line of smoke. He always looked very well with his head far back and his eyes slanting down. "Do you think you've finished—finished with this Columbus Avenue life?"

"I shall come back to complete my course, and I'm going to stay on here. Theodora counts on it, as she comes every Saturday, you know. But, even so, I've pretty well finished."

"It's in your blood, my dear."

He had expected an outcry, the customary beating of wings, but I didn't mind much. "I know why you've so often told me that, Van."

"Why?"

"It weakens a girl's defenses when she has no opinion of herself. A girl must be as proud as Lucifer of her goodness if she wants to preserve it."

He was very much hurt. "I've always sheltered you."

"Oh, yes, you wanted to teach me life beautifully." I smiled forlornly at the recollection of my lessons.

"Well, didn't I teach you?"

"You began in a private room of a hotel with an unsavory reputation. You made me feel provincial when I balked at going to your rooms, and to your kissing me before your servant. You always

made me feel mean when I wanted to be good."

"You're getting very careful with yourself, aren't you?" he sneered. "That's something new."

"It is every woman's business, but I have been long about it. You impressed me with the sensation that it wasn't any use in my being fine—that I hadn't a chance."

"I doubt if you had, in these surroundings. You put yourself here—I didn't do it."

"Yes, I did it all. I came very near throwing myself over the bridge just before I reached Mrs. Croakes's the first night. I have thought a good many times since that it would have been wiser if I had done so, because I didn't believe there was any way out of it. You assured me that one of my type couldn't do any better for herself. You didn't want me to move; this suited you."

"It suited you, too, didn't it?"

"I was poor, and after a while I took it all for granted. You called what I was learning growth—you wanted to see me grow, I remember."

"And didn't you grow?"

"I didn't grow in any direction but yours; that was what you planned for."

"You didn't do any better when you tried to manage for yourself. A nice bunch—those Raffertys."

"Of course that was wrong. I was trying to do it all myself, and the result of my effort was bad because my direction was faulty. Now I'm on the straight road."

He rose and came over to the couch beside me. Always before I have had to come to him. He tried to take one of my hands in his as he seated himself. I had been sitting very upright with my ten fingers interlocked. They refused to come apart, and he held, rather clumsily, my knitted fists together.

This was very hard for his pride, and he thought it time to hurt me. "I suppose you fancy you have said good-bye to your emotional life. It is only moving over to higher-priced quarters. Bah!" He dropped my woven-together fingers as though they were contaminating him.

They disentangled themselves, and lay idly in my lap as my thoughts softened.

"It seems to me, Van, that I've had enough emotion in my life to last a long time. I sometimes feel burned out by fires too hot for my age. I expect they will come again, for I watch the lives of these women around me, and I know that good and bad women are only slightly different. The rules of life remain the same. But the next time I hope I shall be better prepared to meet the flames. I hope they won't be fierce fires at all, just logs on the hearthstone. But the coming of love again is not troubling me now. One would think, in this neighborhood, that there is nothing else in life but falling in love and suffering over it, but I've found a whole world full of interesting, animating topics."

"What makes you think you've stopped caring for me?" He always asked such questions in a pretense at jest. He was too proud to show that they were of any concern to him.

"Answer me," he pressed. "What made you stop?"

"You," I replied.

"Me?" Anything with him in it he rather liked.

I nodded.

"Poor Missy," was his sudden gentle comment, "don't you know that men love most when they're most brutal?" I believe that Van was sincere in this. He always thought that he was most a man when he was cruel.

"I don't mind your having been unkind to me—not any more," I said tranquilly. He got up and walked about in a bewildered way, eyeing me. "When we have to get over caring for a good man there is a great deal to overcome, but when we love a man who hasn't been kind there is nothing to forget but our infatuation. No woman really likes the bad traits."

"Sophistry!" he exclaimed, walking up and down the room. "Those women over there have soaked you full of meaningless phrases already. Cult, all cult. Why, you're one of the cults, too. In a little while they will be through with you."

"I expect they will," I answered.

"That is why I must do the most with my opportunity. First one makes an impression, and then one must make good."

"What do you propose to do in the future?"

"Some day I may become a dancer. I'm not afraid any more, for it isn't a sensuous life—it's hard work. But for a while, until I know more and get money to study, I am going to teach."

"You're going to teach!" stopping before me. "Whom?"

"Girls."

"Girls! Good God!"

That brought me to my feet. "What do you mean?"

My anger added to his. "They will be interesting classes. Are they to learn everything you know?"

"I'm to teach dancing. I can protect them from everything I know."

"You protect them! When you know as much about girls as I do, my dear, you will find that the presence of evil is quite sufficient for them. They are eager for it and they absorb it. Look what you have done."

We were both trembling with rage. "Van, I forbid you to say anything more!"

"Pooh! Forbid! Why, you'll never be able to keep your classes—"

"I'm going to, I tell you—"

"You will attract the brothers and the sweethearts and the husbands."

"That isn't true. I haven't done it. That isn't true."

"There will be gossip."

"I've done nothing, nothing wrong."

"And there'll be hell to pay until you're back among your own again."

My face quivered, grimaced from the nausea of disgust.

"Van, I want you to go. I've treated you with consideration too long. I'm sick of you. You don't frighten me one bit. Yours is the common viewpoint of a common man. Yes, a second-rate man, in birth, breeding and social position. I've felt it for a long time. Now I've said it—and I want you to go."

"Who told you that?" he blurted out.

I felt sorry for him. His face was flushed like a schoolboy's. Even in

Columbus Avenue a girl student had found him lacking in the elements of polite living which he so greatly valued. I made no reply; and thrashing himself into the noisy rage which his kind most enjoy, he lashed at me:

"You little country jake, you dare to sit in judgment on me! By God, what a nerve—and I taught you the use of a fork! You meet a few fashionable people, and now you go off with your Mrs. Abbott and give me a nod of good-bye. You take up with a lot of anemic men and women and think you're in that sacred circle for good. Won't you get the sack when you're discovered at your old tricks! Don't think you won't go back to them. It's in you. We all find our level—you'll get back to yours. And don't you come to me then. I don't want you faded. A faded fool is the saddest thing on earth except a faded tart. You'll be both. Now you're just a pretty ninny—a pretty one—and a tart—a tart—do you hear?"

He called me other names.

The tears came into my eyes and rolled down my cheeks. Oh, the pity of it! The pity of it! That I could have loved him, and found beautiful traits in him, and that I must see him this way! He had held me in his arms, knowing me to be a good girl, and now rained these words upon me!

Suddenly he saw my tears as I stood watching him pitch about the room, with his mouth full of curses for me. He hesitated, eyeing me coarsely. His rage left him, or it had, by some subtlety of nature, twisted from one passion into another more menacing. His arms wrapped around me; his hands ceaselessly caressed me, his words continued in a torrent:

"Missy—my own—my girl—this is the way to love, isn't it—isn't it? Fire, little girl—red flames—we know, don't we? Listen to me—don't struggle; you've every right to stay here—listen to me: it's just come to me—you're game—you're what I'm looking for—you held out—you're great—I'm for you—always, always! Now listen: I'll marry you—yes, love, I will. You'll be my wife—it's the right end—we're



meant for each other. Don't cry, girl—it's going to be all right. Missy, I'm going to marry you. I've made the *amende* now—the *amende honorable*—haven't I? Do you hear me? Missy—answer me—I'm not going to give you up! Missy, speak—say something—say—*Missy!*”

When I am very old I shall still hear Van's cry of my name. I shall still feel the lunge of my body as he pushed me back to see if it could be true—to see, not only to hear, that I was laughing at him.

He didn't speak again. It was all over. He knew it. When he passed through the door he had his coat and hat. I wondered at the time how he got them. I wondered, too, how I could wonder over such a simple thing, but I kept on laughing. The front door banged and I was still faintly chuckling.

But by the time I heard the postman's whistle I had quite stopped.

The metal clap of the lid sounded against the iron of the letter box, and I went down to see if Mrs. Abbott had sent me a time table. She had, and Pearl received a letter, too. She had to go right out. When I returned to my dim room the lamps were glowing in from the street, and the globe of the pharmacy was shedding its colors impartially about.

The ruby ray that I once called “Mr. Ruyme” drenched the white of my blouse with mechanical regularity. But I attached no significance to it. When my own light was on I unfolded the time table. At first glance it would seem to be a long, hard journey, but I searched until I found a better way. And that is a good deal like my life, I think.



## A MAN'S MEDITATIONS

By Nancy Byrd Turner

**G**IRLS don't stand with reluctant feet “where the brook and river meet”—they take to the river like ducks. It's when they've got a few miles out that they begin to splash and flounder around and try to get back to the brook again.

No woman ever yet loved a man without wanting to push his hair back from his brow; and no man, however deep his affection, ever failed to wish she'd let his hair alone.

Many a strong man, who has kept his head under fire of a Gatling gun, has lost it when a woman began to quiver her underlip.

Discretion may get the better part of valor sometimes, but it's valor that rides off with the lady in the saddle.

The thoughts of youth may be long, long thoughts, according to the poet—but oh, the thoughts of a little past youth!



**SCANDAL** has a telling effect on most women.

# ELEGY

By Furnley Maurice

**G**O you and thank your gods that you have died  
With all your songs and visions in your breast,  
Ere you have known your genius crucified  
High on the rude cross of the world's behest.

Down where you slumber is no dream of light;  
Whom the gods love they gather and hold fast,  
Gather unto the brown arms of the night,  
Unto the utter silence of the past.

Silence and sleep! We have for you no cry  
Of anguish, and the voice of love is dumb—  
Better to be the coming man and die  
Than be the coming man and never come!

Better to die ere the red bud has burst,  
Than know the grief of petals withered;  
Than watch the slow death of the voice you nursed,  
And face the world with all thine impulse dead;

Than feel your sacred vestments fall away  
One after one through all the silent years—  
Until you stand so helpless to the day  
That when men ask for songs you give them tears.

To feel our power grow less from year to year—  
Ah, God, is there a greater grief than this?  
To call the spirit that moved of old and hear  
No answer but the roar of the abyss!

But you are saved from this—you were not weak,  
Singing of youth and roses and the sun;  
Men know you promised greater things, and speak  
In whispers of the things you might have done.



**“H**OW about that Atlantic liner?”  
“Oh, she’s safe enough. There’s a rumor ashore that she’s afloat.”  
“That’s good. I heard there was a rumor afloat that she was ashore.”

# THE YELLOW MOTOR CAR

By Robert Emmet MacAlarney

WHEN Bobby Bradford was killed at an unguarded railroad crossing while automobiling, everyone knew that what had happened had been decreed by the fates long ago—ever since motor cars were first invented.

Not that Bradford had been to blame; the inquiry showed that the locomotive had not whistled before reaching the curve. But he had purchased a new and faster car each year, and paid more fines for speeding—paid them cheerfully—than any other man on Long Island. Bradford never drank, and he smoked but little. The exhilaration which many find in alcohol and nicotine he had enjoyed through the medium of a perfectly purring engine and the rasp of rubber tires over oiled macadam.

Mrs. Bradford was with him when the accident occurred. The odd thing about it was that, although the Long Beach express tossed the motor a few rods from the metals, upon a daisy-covered bank at the right of the road, Bradford alone was hurt. One wheel of the automobile had been smashed and the steering knuckle had snapped; but other than that and a few scratches, which showed on the fresh yellow paint, the machine was uninjured. They lifted Mrs. Bradford from among the crushed daisies, unconscious, but suffering only from shock. Bradford was face down, half under the hood. A bruise on the temple was the only thing to show how the thread of his irresponsible young existence had been cut.

I had looked longest at his untroubled countenance the afternoon they took him from "The Birches" to let him sleep more soundly on the hillside within hearing of the highway along

which he had driven the yellow car so often. And I had gone abroad the winter afterward, staying longer than I had planned. Helen Bradford's note reached me at the Carston Club two days after my return.

"I saw your name on the passenger list of the *Mauretania*," she wrote. "Won't you come down over Sunday? There will be no other guests—just auntie, you and I. I have not been going about much, and my friends see little of me. Please come."

Bradford's old valet, Brookins, met me with a red road wagon and a hackney. "We don't have motors at 'The Birches' any more," he said as he took my bag. "That is, we don't have any but one. Mrs. Bradford drives it. You'll find her changed, sir. She looks much the same, but we servants notice a change."

She welcomed me by the huge hall fireplace, in front of which so many merry parties had roasted chestnuts at Thanksgiving or sipped Christmas Eve coffee while waiting for Bobby to distribute the tree gifts. She was still the slim, yellow-haired girl whom he had wooed in such impetuous fashion that Helen Evington's family announced engagement and wedding with almost unconventional haste.

But while she gave me a steady hand, I knew she was suffering quite as much as when she had awakened to know that he was dead. There were no telltale lines to indicate the cherishing of a great grief—not even around the mouth, where the anguish of a woman reveals itself first. What told me the truth was the altered fiber of her voice. It had changed curiously; it had become altogether metallic, with a painful brittle-

ness apparent—much as if the soft covering of her tones had been scraped away, leaving the delicate but bare framework of articulateness.

"This is friendly of you, Tom," she said. "Auntie is upstairs enjoying her after-luncheon nap. You shall see her at dinner. I intend motoring you over to the Country Club for tea, unless you prefer it here."

"The club by all means," said I, before I followed Brookins and my bag upstairs. The valet eyed me anxiously as he fussed with the straps.

"She's changed, sir, isn't she—begging your pardon? We were all fond of Mr. Bradford, sir. Things have never been the same since they brought him home."

"Does she sleep?" I asked.

"Jennie, her maid, says she sleeps mostly in Mr. Bradford's Morris chair. And she always wakes up listening for something."

Mrs. Bradford was already in the car when I stepped upon the veranda. She sat at the wheel, wearing a tan dustcoat and a veil. And as she shot the automobile from beneath the porte-cochère, of a sudden I felt the months click backward to Bobby and his jollity. There is often as much of the personal equation in a motor as in a human being. My face must have betrayed my feeling, for as she let us coast down the looped driveway toward the road she said, "You have guessed?"

"It is the yellow car," said I.

"I couldn't have it that color," she explained. "I wanted to keep it that way, but you know how people would have talked. Sometimes I believe that is what is the matter. If it were only yellow again, I might—"

The scraping metal in her words set my teeth on edge. Why hadn't someone looked after Bradford's wife in these twenty-four months of her fresh widowhood?

"If you will let me speak plainly, Helen—" I ventured.

But she threw off the muffler as we swung out upon the macadam. "We'll talk plainly this evening," she said.

A mile from the house she nodded to-

ward the left. "That is where it happened. Yonder is the bank with the daisies."

The car slowed to a mere crawl. She was leaning forward, steering with one hand, the other held up as if to warn me not to speak. She was listening—with a terrible intentness; but there was nothing save the crackle of the tires. Then she braked to a standstill, so suddenly that my knees hit the brass clock screwed upon the dashboard.

"Listen!" she cried. The threadbare tone was gone; this was the warm voice of the real Helen Evington. As quickly, however, the moment passed. She turned to me, dull disappointment in her glance.

"What did you hear?" she asked.

I shook my head.

"Nothing at all?"

"Nothing," said I.

She seemed almost cheerful at the club, pouring me orange pekoe on the porch while we watched the players straggling past the bunkers. Several women came over and spoke to her. By their remarks I divined that this was the first visit Mrs. Bradford had paid to the club since her husband's death.

We were chatting when the car neared the railroad crossing on the way home. The rear wheels had cleared the rails and we were beside the bank with the tufts of daisies when she turned quickly to stare at me. And as she shut off the power it was I who threw up my hand and cried, "Hush!"

Laughter was in my ears—laughter unmistakable. And the laughter was Bobby Bradford's.

What she whispered was like the complaint of an irritable child. "You heard it the second time you crossed the tracks. It took me much longer than that. It was only a confused mumble at first."

Then she released the brake. The laughter had ceased.

"I never heard Bobby laugh like that," I said.

"I heard him only once," she returned. "We had our first quarrel just before the train came. It ended with that laugh. Now you know what I have been living with for two years."

She talked after dinner while her aunt had gone upstairs. We had the veranda to ourselves; there were only the fireflies, the creak of wicker as one of us moved in the stillness, and her voice, like a thin, weakened wire.

"It did not come right away," she said. "After his death I could not bear to sell this motor with the others. He had been so fond of it; it was almost new when the accident happened. I traveled for six months with auntie; we went as far as California. And when I came back to 'The Birches' of course I could not use the car with its yellow coat, so I had it painted black. Auntie does not know it is the same car even now.

"The first time I drove to the crossing it was at twilight. I heard nothing then. I must have gone a half-dozen times, always at dusk, before I found courage to drive there in full daylight. When I heard it I thought I should go insane. I remember racing to the house and taking Brookins back with me to the crossing. With it ringing in my ears, I asked him to listen. He heard nothing. Yet you heard it!"

"Yes, I heard it," I replied.

"This is only the beginning," she murmured. "I am like a dull pupil at a lesson."

She was altogether unstrung. I sat in the dark, listening to the little catches of her breath, for a half-hour before I pleaded weariness and persuaded her to come within. I recall eyeing myself suspiciously in the glass of my dressing table. There was no flush of fever, and my pulse was normal. Yet certainly I had heard Bobby Bradford's laugh that afternoon. And Bobby had been dead for two years!

We did not speak of it again until she drove me to my train on Monday after breakfast.

"I have thought it all out," she said. "I am just beginning to get the message. The message starts with the laugh—that hard laugh, so unlike his. He laughed that way before the train struck us; we had been quarreling—our first quarrel."

I touched one of her gloved hands on the steering wheel. "Don't, Helen,"

I said. "Don't tell me these intimate things."

She looked at me with no resentment; there was only a puzzled expression in her glance. "Why not?" she asked. "Oh, I forgot. You don't know. We were quarreling about you."

"Bobby—angry over me!" I exclaimed. "I can't believe it!"

She smiled pitifully. "It is hard to believe. It was so hard to believe that I thought he was joking when he spoke of you that day. Even after I knew he was in earnest I couldn't help teasing him. It was so foolish to be jealous of anyone; he held me so firmly with his caring; it was like the silly anger of a boy. I laughed. And then he laughed—the laughter that echoes now at the crossing.

"He said something afterward—then the train came. And now I must begin with the laughter and go through the rest of it until I come to the words he did not finish. When he saw the engine he thought that both of us would be killed. He tried to speak quickly. But he did not finish—not while he was alive. Yet if I am patient I shall have the rest of the message. You see, I am beginning at the very beginning—that terrible laughing. That is the first part of the lesson.

"Don't think it doesn't hurt. It does—cruelly. But the rest will come out of it. At first there was only a blurred sound at the crossing. Little by little the laugh came. The rest of it must come, too.

"I have walked across the tracks and driven across them in the trap. But I hear it only when I am in the yellow car. You will come when I send for you? The message really has to do with you as well as with me, you see."

It was all of three weeks before Mrs. Bradford communicated with me again. This time she sent a telegram: "The rest is coming. Will meet you tomorrow."

She was waiting in the car when I reached Great Neck.

"I need you to test my progress," she said. "I might only imagine I heard. Suffering makes one so uncertain. But

I think the message is beginning to come."

Her eyes had a feverish sparkle, but the hands grasping the wheel were firm enough. We swept along the smooth Country Club pike until we dipped to meet the tracks.

"I sha'n't even stop this time," she said. "When we get to the turn in the lane tell me what you heard."

As before, it was not until the wheels were even with the daisied bank that I caught the mirthless laughter of Bobby Bradford. And then, without interval, "A man is a fool ever really to care."

There was the hum of the motor, the far-off honk of another car's horn, even the call of a lazily marauding crow. I heard these things distinctly. But I heard Bradford as well.

At the turn she put on the brakes. "What did he say?" she asked.

I repeated the words.

"Can't you see how it is coming out?" she cried. "It is like using a phonograph with a dull needle. If one is patient and tries many times he gets the entire record. He spoke those words. First he laughed, and then he said: 'A man is a fool ever really to care.' The rest of the message should be: 'Jump, Helen! I never—' That was all he said; it was all he had time for. He thought we were going to die then. But I believe that what he finished saying—on the other side, I mean—will make me want to live once more."

"But what if you are wrong?" I spoke without thinking.

"I must have it none the less," she answered.

Once again that summer I had a telegram. And she had driven me to the crossing where I heard the laughter and the exclamation: "A man is a fool ever really to care." But this time, while her eyes searched my face, I heard the words that she had said would be part of the message: "Jump, Helen! I never—" Nothing more. It was as if someone had lifted the needle from the cylinder.

I did not attempt to explain it away then. I have never attempted to explain it away. I know what I have heard. But I saw that she was sapping

body and mind in this struggle with the silence—for nothing more would come. That winter at my urging, her aunt took her to spend the early months of the new year in the Riviera. She wrote me that they would open "The Birches" in May.

It was the latter part of the month when she summoned me. The woman who waited, as my train dropped a lone passenger at the station, sat at the wheel of a yellow motor.

She gave me no opportunity for wonder. "I had it repainted," she said. "It came only yesterday. As soon as I knew it would be here I telegraphed to you. The black color has been holding back the message, I think. We must listen in the car as it was when Bobby used to drive it."

Traveling had done nothing for Mrs. Bradford. As slim as she had always been, she was less than slim now. She had lost the power of appearing composed. It was as if she did not care longer to keep up a pretense; her hands trembled wretchedly as she watched me stow my bag in the tonneau. She was a mere wraith of what Helen Bradford had been. I reproached myself for having lent encouragement to her madness—for it seemed madness to me now. In the months since I had last sat in an automobile with her, listening for sounds unearthly at a railroad crossing, the reality of it had vanished.

"We will drive to 'The Birches' first," she said. "Auntie is expecting you. We shall not try for the rest of the message until tomorrow."

I had a moment with Miss Sturgis before dinner.

"She is dreadfully altered, Mr. Barrett," she said. "She traveled but saw nothing. Everywhere she seemed to be listening. She still sleeps in a chair and wakes up frequently, as if someone were calling to her. The doctor says she is simply nervous and run down. He can prescribe only country air and exercise. She has not wept once since Mr. Bradford died. That is not natural. There is something wrong which she is hiding from me. It will be just three years tomorrow since the accident. She in-



sisted upon getting home at this time."

So it would be—the third anniversary of Bobby's death. And his favorite motor car, its yellow coat restored, would visit the crossing on the morrow—for Helen Bradford's last groping after an unfinished message. Again I felt the keenest of self-reproach. But what was I to do? If it had been imagination, I, too, had imagined it. If it were really a message, arrested by the accident and vibrating silently until soul-to-soul wireless permitted the final words to be spoken, I should be worse than a criminal to interpose.

After luncheon the next day the car was at the door, Miss Sturgis watching us depart. Mrs. Bradford waved her an almost gay good-bye from the wheel. The dear old lady on the veranda did not know what was behind this mask of eagerness. Probably she fancied that my visit had brought the spark of color to her favorite niece's cheek, and blessed me for it.

"We shall be back for tea at four," called Helen.

She drove several miles out of the way, as if she were reluctant to make the trial—I fancied it was that until she explained that she was waiting until the three o'clock express had passed.

"I have made many tests and suffered many disappointments since I saw you," she said. "I always hear the laughter and, 'A man is a fool ever really to care. Jump, Helen! I never—' But not once has any of the rest of it come. I believe that certain things are necessary to unlock the words. The car must be just as when Bobby drove it, and you must be in it as well as I, for the message concerns us both. And today is—"

"The anniversary," I interrupted. "If the message is not finished today, will you give it up, Helen?"

"I promise to give up trying," she replied. "I shall have done all that I could. You must not think I doubt him. I feel sure that he cared. But I must know."

I read what the newspapers said about the accident. The fact that it was

Mrs. Bradford, in a yellow motor car; that a Long Beach express had run us down, at the same crossing where her husband had been killed three years before—all this, inevitably, made legitimately sensational newspaper copy. But, naturally, the reporters could not chronicle what actually occurred. Miss Sturgis knows. I told her before they took me to the Carston Club from the Nassau Hospital.

Mrs. Bradford had waited on the dipping road along the golf links until the rumble of the express was audible. She then sent the car ahead, slowly.

And, inching past the bank where they had picked her up from among the crushed daisies, even in the rattle of the oncoming train we heard Bobby Bradford's laughter and, "A man is a fool ever really to care. Jump, Helen! I never—" There it halted again—a record that a faulty needle could not complete.

But what startled me—what startled us both—was that the laughter and the unfinished words began repeating themselves, as if someone were trying to set a record back, hoping that the dulled needle might slip across the broken place into the rest of it.

I saw a puff of engine smoke beyond the curve. The whistle sounded piercingly three or four times. But twisted through the rumble and the screeching was the whirring of that invisible voice record. The words fairly jostled one another. They would begin with "A man" and end with "I never," completing the revolution so quickly that it sounded like a recurring echo of "I never-ever-ever."

Helen Bradford turned, her face radiant with sudden understanding. "I know now!" she cried, in the thunder along the rails. "To get the rest of the message *we must go through with it!*"

Miss Sturgis has asked me why I did not drag her from the wheel. I did. But the front of the machine was upon the tracks before her wrists yielded, and what did it avail then? In the instant given me—it actually seemed like a long time—I marked the familiar listening look. Then she smiled.

With a roar the locomotive reached out for us. But I, too, heard Bobby's whirring laughter, the old message that we knew by heart—and the rest of it!

The sentence was finished now. His voice said: "I never minded good old Tom, dearest, for I love you."

I heard that, plainly, I tell you—as plainly as I heard the world falling into pieces when the roar and the blackness mingled. I can close my eyes and hear it yet.

They dragged me to where she lay when I awoke and found the trainmen around me. I cursed at them, and they moved me half resentfully. A man with

two broken legs and only a bit of one arm left useful has to be dragged. I thought she was dead even then. But her face was not marked, thank God! Fragments of the yellow motor car splotched the fresh grass like fantastic spring blossoms.

Her eyes opened. There was much gladness in them, and she knew me.

"You heard?" she whispered.

"I heard," said I.

"Bobby cared," she murmured.

This is what I told to Miss Sturgis and to no one else. As for the rest of the fatal accident story, the newspapers told that part of it well enough.



## WOMEN IN THE CITY

By Berton Braley

**W**OMEN, women—watch them go past!  
 Gay women, gray women,  
 Glad women, sad women,  
 Women who're modest and those who are fast;  
 Sleek women, *chic* women, dashing or meek women,  
 Women most beautiful,  
 Faithless or dutiful,  
 Women as deadly as serpents that coil;  
 Women of luxury, women of toil;  
 Young women, old women,  
 Fiery or cold women;  
 Endlessly passing along on the street,  
 Wanton or worthy or bitter or sweet.  
 Jezebel, Helen, Delilah, Elaine—  
 Each has her counterpart here and today;  
 Women of blessing and women of bane,  
 Thronging along in their varied array.  
 Here you have cruelty, evil and lust;  
 Here you have tenderness, goodness and trust,  
 Women to cheer you and women to grieve,  
 Lift you to honor or lure to your fall—  
 Just a procession of daughters of Eve  
 Not greatly changed by the years, after all;  
 Here in the heart of the whirlpool so vast,  
 Watch them go past!



**F**OOLS can ask more questions than wise men can answer. Any man will tell you this who has just been cornered.

# DURAS THE GREAT

By Herman Marcus

MELLINI was well known; so was Simonet, and so also was Paul Magnier. That is to say, well known in the Quartier Latin, which, after all, is a most wonderful place in which to be well known. But Duras was not only well known; he was famous. His name was in all mouths, and one was always asking: "What has he done new—our dear Duras?" "What! You don't know? Listen then: imagine that there is a canvas, two metres high . . ." Then in a minute would invariably come a shout of laughter. For famous Duras was a joke, a famous joke.

Born in Muret, on the Garonne, he had come to Paris at the age of nineteen, with nothing but great self-confidence, a strong Southern accent and his masterpiece, "Terpsicore." Arrived at Paris, he managed to get admitted to the École Nationale des Arts Décoratifs. He was a "*nouveau*," and was forced to exhibit his "Terpsicore." The muse of the dance was seen floating on a vivid blue sky, in one of the most characteristic attitudes of the cancan. She defied utterly both the law of decency and that of gravitation, wore her hair in the latest mode and possessed castanets. Consequently she was greeted with tremendous applause by the students of the "Arts Déco." "What grace! What line! What movement! One could not improve a single square centimeter of the canvas!" Then, kneeling before the enraptured Duras, who took everything in earnest: "Monsieur, we salute you—prince of students—king of artists. To you we kneel—great master!"

Every six months Duras completed a masterpiece. This was bought by subscription by the whole of the Quartier

Latin; and the painter was happy in the belief that some great critic or amateur had purchased his work. The joke was universal. In fact, all the world laughed at it except Duras himself. But it was not a bitter joke—far from it. It was a joke of infinite kindness. For was not its object supremely happy? Did he not have the satisfaction of seeing himself the most appreciated artist in the Quartier? Could he not be a little patronizing, not only to the young students, but even to those individuals who had arrived—those men who had pictures in the spring Salon, whose names appeared in the newspapers and who eat meat every day? Yes, indeed he could. And did he not receive letters from foreign potentates paying tribute to his talent, his art and his inspiration? Did not royal knees bend before his genius? Little did Duras imagine that these letters were from his nearest friends, or that the trousers on those royal knees were hopelessly baggy. He made much of these tributes of princes, and of their letters he made a scrapbook—accepting the enclosed sums in payment for his work with great outward unconcern and inward rejoicing. These sums were far from princely, and Duras was often heard to say to his comrades: "Yes, my friends, Art feeds her man but she does not fatten him." Also he was regarded as a great advertisement by the proprietors of the cafés in the Quartier. Happy was the man who could say: "Duras will be here tonight," because he was sure to have a busy evening. Duras, therefore, could drink himself quietly to sleep on their comfortable leather cushions without even a thought as to who should pay.

From all these things one sees easily that the joke was a very kind one. Everyone loved Duras. Perhaps because in the Quartier one loves to laugh. Perhaps because one loves him whom one makes happy. Perhaps just because no one could help it. Kind, generous, with an easy smile, never angry, never in a hurry, never a bore—what a pity Duras could not paint! He had said to little Rose Blanche: "You grew up in the streets. It is a very great pity. . . . You know that yourself without being told? Yes, I suppose so, but this you may not know, *ma gosse*: life is like the big Crédit Lyonnais—one only takes out what one has put in. Put in—the best you have—little Rose Blanche."

In the autumn, when the "Arts Déco" opened after the vacation, there was always a grand review of models. They were judged one by one, and almost all the engagements to pose for the entire year were then made. Duras always did his best to have the less attractive girls engaged—and with fair success. "For you must see," he would say to his friends, "these ugly little ones eat just as much as the pretty ones, and besides, they get taken to dinner much less frequently." This last was really the height of tact, as the "little ones" referred to were never taken to dinner at all.

It was Duras who made the success of the little café "La Lionne," and at the same time of that imbecile of a M. Dupont, its proprietor. "But," said Duras, "it was necessary to do something, as the poor fool was not only starving himself to death but his patrons into the bargain."

It was Duras who was voted creator of the most sacrilegious costume worn at the Quatz Arts ball. And yet it was he who knelt all one New Year's Eve in the immense transept of St. Sulpice with little Durasette—as she was called—his best friend. "I want so much to save your soul," she sobbed, and Duras went.

In the morning at about four o'clock they left the church. Durasette was in ecstasy. "You are saved! You are saved, my dear little goldfish of a Duras! You are saved! In *l'Enfer* there is a

devil, all red, with a pitchfork, and he puts one in the fire till one is so hot, oh, so hot—then in the cold water till one is as cold as ice—then again into the fire—then again into the water. Just like *pommes sautées*—you know, *mon enfant*? And it lasts forever—the devil keeps changing his mind. But *le Purgatoire*—where you must go—that only lasts till the end of the world. You are saved!" Duras thought to himself: "Till the end of the world—and she calls that saved! *Eh, bien, merci!*" But he said nothing so unkind. He merely asked Durasette if she could not enjoy a little coffee. "And an omelette with onions," was the prompt reply.

It was also Duras who changed the retreat of Mlle. Réjane Carmen de Monville from her "*apartement*" into a triumphal march. There are sceptics who doubt the authenticity of mademoiselle's name—however, no one has ever questioned there being full and sufficient reasons for her *déménagement*. Mlle. Réjane Carmen de Monville would have found herself sitting on her small trunk in the street had not Duras arrived with two *charrettes* and twenty friends. There were shouts of joy and kisses of welcome. Mademoiselle was lifted on strong shoulders; her small furniture was piled on the two handcars—the most intimate objects in the greatest evidence—someone started to sing "*Consue l'état*," the whole crowd joined in and the procession was off. Paris smiled; the students were elated; Mlle. Réjane Carmen was overjoyed, and Duras was content.

When it became known that Irène, the littlest model in the Quartier, was sick, Duras went about, collected seventeen francs, and bought a whole cartful of roses. Thirty of the contributors, all students and friends of Duras, marched with these to Irène's. They knocked, burst in and spread the flowers all over the room. As it was a very small one, the roses completely filled it. Only four or five men could enter at a time, but all could hear the tiny little blonde saying that she had never had a flower given her before and that now she had a cartful. Well, she could not express her

thanks to these gentlemen—she was crying so—which she knew was very unladylike, but which she couldn't help when anyone was good to her.

Twenty years after Duras had first come to Paris it was just the same. His friends were little bigger men or little bigger *fainéants*—one or the other. But he himself had not changed. He was a landmark, like the Jardin du Cluny or the Pont des Arts—a thing one counts on. Then one morning in April—no one knew why—he died—without any fuss or without giving anyone any trouble. The Quartier went into mourning. Someone put the flag of the "Arts Déco" at half-mast. Over one-third of the student body went to the funeral. This meant much.

Mellini, Simonet, Paul Magnier and La Petite Durasette gave a dinner in Duras's honor. The thirty guests might well consider themselves honored; and all said the repast was "all that there is of magnificent." Everyone amused himself tremendously. There was Chablis at a *prix fou*, Baune beyond price, and Dupont—of course the dinner was "*chez Dupont*"—was evidently grateful. This fact is remarkable, as Dupont was, as everyone knows, a café proprietor.

Simonet became so merry he sang a song written by himself for his own funeral. "It is my song, but I will give it to Duras—dear Duras; he needs it more than I do, poor devil!" There was loud applause. La Grande Armée, an enormous brunette, sang and danced with Le Petit Suisse, and only stopped because "Mimi-with-one-eye-that-says-'Zut'-to-the-other" kissed Leo on the ear and Leo had kissed Mimi on the back of the neck—and because, at the same time, Angeline had spilt coffee all over her dress, which dress she had borrowed from La Grande Armée. Francine was just pretending to go to sleep on the shoulder of Louis—in order to show Margot how perfectly at home she felt there—when Mellini rose and said, or rather shouted: "*Mes amis!*" All turned. Mellini was holding the famous scrapbook of Duras. There was a loud laugh, but it was only Leo, who was drunk. No one else seemed even to

breathe. "I will read a little, my friends," said Mellini. All got ready to listen. Francine left Louis's shoulder. All stopped making a noise, except Durasette, who had not made a sound the whole evening.

"The first letter is from China. It says:

"To His Honorable Greatness, the creator of pictures, Duras, painter of Paris, Tong How Poy, mandarin of Peking, sends homage, and dares to hope that His Nobleness M. Duras will deign to accept his gratitude for the masterpiece 'Terpsicore.'"

"The next letter is in German, but I will translate it, my friends. It goes:

"The Prince of Mecklenburg-Strelitz wishes to congratulate Herr Duras of Paris upon his brilliant creation, 'Science,' recently arrived at Berlin. Will Herr Duras please notify His Highness in the event of his making any more such pictures?"

"Signed.

"Adolphe Frederic III."

Mellini read thirty-seven letters in the order of their appearance. While they were being read, the friends of Duras exchanged such glances as would have done him endless good had he but seen them. Perhaps he did—who knows?

Suddenly Mellini started back. "On the last page I find a letter written by Duras himself!" he gasped. Everyone was thunderstruck. "Read it"—"Open it"—"It is impossible!"

"But I tell you I know his hand as I know my own!"

"Give it here!"—"Read it!"—"Quick!"

Trembling, Mellini broke the seal and unfolded the letter. All crowded about him. Several held candles. "To my most dear friends—" Mellini choked and had to begin again.

"To my most dear friends—to my little Durasette and to all my comrades of the Quartier. Thanks from a heart which is overflowing—not with sorrow, no, but with the deepest gratitude; from a heart which for twenty years has been filling with the love of my sympathetic friends. And, dear friends, some of you have said that it was a big, big heart. Well, it is now full, and more than full. For, listen—I know of your kind deception toward me. I have always known it—no matter how—and then I'm not so blind. I know 'twas you who bought my pictures. I know they were atrocious; I know I

*can't paint.* But I loved your deception. I took it as you meant it—in the deepest friendship. I didn't have the courage to stop anything so wonderful, so very wonderful. To me this book is a bundle of love letters—it shows me the love of my friends. Everyone in the Quartier has been my friend. I can only thank you. I kiss you all—you have been my dream, my life, and it is my only hope that you will be my future. It is time for me to go. Thanks, dear friends, from my heart—from my spirit—and from my soul. Good-bye, and thanks.  
"Duras."

They were crying like children—these good friends of Duras; so for several minutes no one spoke. Then Mag-nier said: "He knew it—he knew it

all the time—that we were lying to him."

"Yes, he knew it," said Simonet. "What a grief to bear! He knew that he could not paint and that he was not an artist."

"No," cried Mellini—so loud the room echoed—"no, he could not paint—it is true; but he *was* an artist."

"Yes, yes, yes!" all shouted. And Simonet said: "Yes, you're right!" and raising his glass: "Here's to Duras, the greatest artist of us all!"

Durasette, staring out of the black window, alone remained seated.



## A SUMMER NIGHT ON BROADWAY

By Louis Untermeyer

NIGHT is the city's disease;  
The streets and the people one sees  
Glow with a light that is strangely inhuman,  
A fever that never grows cold.  
Heaven completes the disgrace,  
For now, with her star-pitted face,  
Night has the leer of a dissolute woman,  
Cynical, moon-scarred and old.

And I think of the country roads,  
Of the quiet, sleeping abodes  
Where every tree is a silent brother  
And the hearth is a thing to cling to.  
And I sicken and long for it now—  
To feel the clean winds on my brow,  
Where Night bends low, like an all-wise mother,  
Looking for children to sing to.



A PROMINENT politician received the following letter from a wide awake constituent of his:

"DEAR SIR:

"I understand you said you was going to take a week off to tear up the big pile of letters asking you for jobs. If everything else is gone, I would like the job of tearing up the letters."



# IN THE MAGNOLIA GARDENS

By James Bardin

**A**LL the air grows luminous, and the slumbering, dreaming midnight  
Stirs and breathes memorial fragrance from the scented winds that pass;  
As upon the wind-kissed river steals a pleated band of moonlight  
And a flowing lace of shadow forms upon the silvered grass.  
In a delicate dark tracework, seeming carved of ebony,  
Spreading oak and somber cypress loom against the brightening sky,  
And the moss upon their branches waves a gray mist in the gloom  
Where the stately tall magnolia guards an alabaster bloom.

As the glow increases 'neath the trees that tower  
Soon appear the pathways bordered with azalea,  
Where wistaria scatters blooms in purple shower  
Mingled with the petals of japonica—  
And as lingering shadows to the pale beams yield  
In a haze of moon mist the garden is revealed,  
And sight is mazed with color as the flowers are swayed  
Amid the leaves like gems on blowing tresses laid.

While thus the woodways brighten  
And dark places lighten,  
"Music murmurs here—  
Leaves purr on the trees,  
And below, around,  
Rise the voices of the ground,  
Afar, anear—  
Rise to join the slender sound  
Made by the lapping of the river,  
By the clicking reeds a-shiver  
And the rustling grass a-quiver  
Beneath the touch of the stealthy breeze—  
And the endless, pulsing beat of a host of gauzy wings  
Adds a measure keenly sweet to the melody that rings—  
Half-heard melody that rises, melody that swells and passes,  
Mingled notes of wind and river, tuneful notes of leaves and grasses,  
And the ceaseless, murmurous voices of the least of singing things.

Here, while music lingers  
And the moonlight's fingers  
Part the leaves to touch the blooms,  
The night begins to weave, amid her glooms,  
A web of dreams; and here  
There come to pace the long parterre

## THE SMART SET

Which fronts the lake and wanders where the shade is  
The invisible forms of those  
Who laid this garden at the river's edge,  
And who, 'mid shrub and hedge  
And jasmine blowing and deep-scented rose,  
Once walked with languid ladies  
Along this flowered way.

So, too, the continuous hum of insects ringing  
Oft comes to be a far more deadly singing  
Than the small tunes that whirring wings essay—  
And the ear perceives the sound of swift lead winging,  
Menacing, clear,  
Like angry bees through battle-stricken air—  
Bees that sucked honey from the heart's red flower  
And stung with death that life, one time so fair,  
So lavish of its love, so gentle of its power,  
That blossomed here.

Slow clouds drift over the moon,  
And as her light fades out on river and lagoon  
Above the wingèd singing swells the croon  
Of ancient trees that moan to the veiled sky.  
Even the rose nods heavily  
As though she dreamed and, dreaming, felt her sigh,  
Kissed by soft, hidden lips beneath the ground—  
And her thick-twined roots about red iron wound  
Vex her with memories of pain, and sound  
Of the thunderous tramp and the ghastly shocks of war.  
And where the lilies are  
A sweet sad music as of rain afar,  
Tinkling on water, falls on listening ears  
Like remembered sound of tears  
Poured out in bleaker years.

With lengthening of hours, the blossoms close their petals  
Gently, like lids on eyes grown dim with care;  
And o'er the garden a low, thick mist cloud settles,  
Above which the trees seem floating on the air.  
Slowly the wind which through the leaves crept sighing  
Ceases to sound; and every note that thrilled  
From rush-trammeled river and grassy mere is dying—  
Even the myriad beating wings are stilled.

Meanwhile, the first faint glow of dawn comes rifting  
The clouds in the east, and morning's carmine hue  
Colors the mist upon the river drifting  
And glints on the grasses strung with gleaming dew;  
Soon all the flowers by the dawn breeze shaken  
Open their blossoms to the flying light,  
And in the shadows the mocking birds awaken  
To weave into music my visions of the night.

# REVELATION

By Gertrude Lynch

“**W**HAT did you say the fellow’s name was?”

Atkinson asked the question, as he followed in the wake of Etienne and preceded his friend David White. Etienne carried suitcases, umbrellas, sticks, overcoats and hats with the ease of a perfectly trained servant, nor did his eyes express surprise at the interrogation.

David White concealed his astonishment with a swift gesture whose only import seemed to be the smoothing of a scrubby mustache. The inward comment that accompanied the gesture was: “How like Atkinson to forget the name of his host!”

After a moment he answered, in a tone which he hoped was too low for Etienne to catch: “John Grant. You are sure to like him. I do not know of any man whose record in business, in society, in his home life is so irreproachable.”

They were now in one of the rooms of the suite set aside for the week end visit. Atkinson noted with approval the exquisite attention to taste and comfort shown in a hundred details. He glanced at the French windows whose curtains were ruffled by a tiny breeze, and at the balcony where easy chairs seemed to invite an after-dinner smoke and a dreamy contemplation of a landscape which had not yet doffed its spring robe of baby green. His answer expressed his satisfaction.

“I’ve heard of that record—clean as well as successful. I’ve been away from my country too long to know many men of his sort. King of finance, eh? I understand that it’s a rare combination.”

Atkinson was removing his coat, and stopped with one pendent sleeve.

“And, madame—I should say Mrs.—er-Grant?”

“She is a perfectly charming woman, good to look at even though she is past her first youth. She must have been a stunner then. She’s one of the ‘ageless,’ don’t you know, like Bernhardt and Terry. She’s simply It in this town, the social leader. It has always been a subject of conjecture what she—who might probably have married anybody—saw in quiet John Grant; but if devotion counts for anything, well, she’s simply haloed with it. John always seems to me like a man who is walking on tiptoe through life for fear he may wake his wife to a knowledge of her weakness in having accepted him.”

“A bit of a lion hunter—yes?”

White changed color. He had employed clever tactics to lure this lion into the home of his friends. He had harped unceasingly for weeks on Atkinson’s need of rest and of country air and the charm of a hospitality that would impose nothing on its recipient. He believed that he had concealed any other motive, and moved warily at the scent of danger.

“Oh, no; she’s not one of those objectionable females who are on an unceasing hunt for celebrities. Not a bit. She’s too—well, too good form, I suppose. She’s just one of those people who have missed something in their own existence, and worship it all the more strenuously when they find those who have gained it. ‘Other heights in other lives’—wasn’t that what the poet said?”

Atkinson did not answer. He was gazing at himself approvingly in a panel mirror, and, shutting the door softly, White left him to his reverie.

He got into his evening clothes, and

hearing no sound in the other room, determined to enjoy the meed of praise due his effort before it was too late and his spark of gratitude be lost sight of in the effulgence of Atkinson's greatness. He had spoken of himself as that personage's guide, philosopher and friend, knowing well that others made the same claim, no better based than his own, which was founded on membership in the same club, with frequent opportunities in that sacred precinct to listen and approve. He had undertaken the task of overcoming Atkinson's reluctance to meet strangers, and had gone about his mission as in an earlier era he might have sought the Holy Grail or the Golden Fleece. To recite the traps he had set, the patience and perseverance employed, would be to weaken his own foreword, but he trusted something to Mrs. Grant's intuition.

The trust was well founded. As he passed the last angle of the stairway, she came from the drawing room and clasped her hands about his arm.

"How shall I ever thank you, dear David? It was my one ungratified wish. You have made me very happy."

Her husband stepped from a neighboring shadow and filled the emotional pause.

"I told her if there was a man on earth could get him it was you. I believe you could have brought him six months ago, but she never gave us any idea she was so eager until—"

Mrs. Grant turned shining eyes in his direction and an elaborate coiffure filleted with diamonds toward David.

"Six months ago! I wasn't ready then."

John Grant did not know what she meant; he had seen before the expression that he caught now, when her fancy would soar a little beyond his reach and a sigh or smile would show there were certain recesses of the soul into which a husband must not pry too closely.

The trio waited in triumphant expectation.

Mrs. Grant had ordered the dinner a half-hour later than the time mentioned to the guest. "They are all alike," she said, in a modulated voice which sug-

gested an elaborate training. "They are childish in their vanities. They won't roar on schedule time, and they love to feel in social life that they are keeping people waiting and that the chef is in paroxysms, just as they enjoy the knowledge of a restive audience in their professional work. It's a law of the artistic temperament."

Then she rose and ran with short steps into the spacious hall with an impulsive and graceful movement of hospitality.

She placed her soft dimply hands in the large ones made cuplike for their reception. "We don't need the introduction that our conventional friend has on his lips, do we?" Grant's handclasp, which followed his wife's at a respectful interval, was unaccompanied by a word. The glance that caromed from man to woman suggested that he knew too well his own verbal incompetence to attempt to compete with perfection.

A servant announced dinner and they strolled informally into the huge dining room. Atkinson neither led nor avoided the conversation. He put in a word now and then, and added an anecdote when it occurred to his mind. He ate voraciously—the middle-aged appetite of a man who was starved in his youth. Mrs. Grant, troubled with no fears in regard to the perfection of service, kept pace with him. She applied herself persistently between the courses to a silver dish filled with rich bonbons which were always placed near her at the dinner hour. Her husband and David White ate and drank abstemiously.

Atkinson put a detaining hand on her arm when she rose. His "You don't mind our smoking?" was a confession that he felt at home with the trio, and that his well known preference for men's society was subject to interregnums of change. She silently accorded permission and took her seat again with a smile of triumph.

He waved aside the proffered cigars of his host, and took out his own silver case repousséd with gold and studded with rubies and diamonds. Each of the cigars it contained was wrapped in a transparent covering on which was a picture of himself with the word "Atkin-

son" below. These cigars were retained as souvenirs in many households.

Mrs. Grant, holding her conversational sail taut between the Scylla of eloquence and the Charybdis of stupidity during the meal, was now so permeated by the sense of well being that she expanded into all sorts of quips and cranks for Atkinson's benefit. She showed that her reputation of wit was fairly earned. Atkinson puffed vigorously great volumes of smoke and enjoyed himself with ostentation. Dazzled by the mental pyrotechnics, as quiet men can be when aroused by the vivacity of a feminine mind which touches nothing that it does not adorn, John Grant and David White sipped their coffee, smoked the pictured cigars pressed upon them from time to time and exchanged glances of wonder and satisfaction. Their own verbal efforts were directed toward putting questions aptly or urging the relation of anecdotes whose humor or pathos they wished the famous guest to enjoy. She told these well, leading cleverly to the climactic moment, never too long delayed, with the art of the trained *raconteur*.

After one of these she rose determinedly, saying, when the laughs of the trio permitted: "I am like one of Charles Read's dear old-fashioned heroines, who waited for an opportunity to make a witty remark, made it and departed to the accompaniment of applause." She shook her curls at the compelling eye of the guest. "No; I must have my beauty sleep."

Atkinson stepped heavily to the door in her wake and bowed with elephantine grace as she paused, knob in hand, to say: "You know we call this the House of Moods. We have no rules. Do not try to find any. Breakfast when you please, and so it goes; good night."

After her departure there was a moment's silence; then Atkinson said, with a sincerity which made amends for a lack of originality:

"When I meet a woman so thoroughly charming as Mrs. Grant, it makes me wonder why I have never followed the example of the majority."

David White spoke quickly. "There aren't many like her."

Grant sighed deeply. He cast a deprecating glance about, then shook his head. He tried to speak but could not. Something—it was not the smoke of the Atkinson cigar—seemed to choke him.

Atkinson read his mind. It is true that he had wondered many times during the evening how it was that a man so deficient in the charm evidently necessary to carry a woman like Mrs. Grant off her feet had succeeded where so many must have failed, yet as he gazed at the elaboration of the room, recalled the perfection of the dinner, the hundred and one details of a model *ménage*, he paid tribute to undeniable qualities. He voiced this by saying:

"I should think a very fortunate woman also."

Grant found his tongue. The suggestion of a material definition for the ill assorted union always irritated him. "Oh, this! If it were a hundred times as much, it would be a bagatelle to what she is fitted for."

Atkinson flicked a long gray ash into the jaws of a bronze crocodile, then with brutal directness responded:

"Well, the woman usually thinks it's a good deal."

"Not such a woman as my wife." There was reproof in the tone, and David scented trouble. He knew Grant's sensitiveness in this direction. Atkinson's stammer helped him to get his own speech in first.

"You see, Atkinson, it's this way. When Grant married, his wife was just about to go on the stage. She would have made a great success—we don't dare prophesy the extent. She had the encouragement and praise of the greatest authority at that time, a man of few words, I have been told, but those ultimate."

Grant interrupted. His voice trembled. His agitation was that of the reserved man whose control is broken down by some compelling inner force.

"I took advantage of a woman's weakness, and she has never allowed me to see that she regretted her choice; but I know, I know." He raised a liqueur

glass and swept it with a circular gesture intended to show the contempt he felt for the wainscoted walls, the priceless canvases, the gold, silver and glass on the buffet—all the paraphernalia of wealth.

"She could have had all these by her own efforts, and something which I cannot give her."

It was an awkward moment, yet the silence was electric with sympathy.

Grant continued: "The last night we were in the city late, it was to hear Bernhardt. We motored back. It was moonlight, and the air wasn't cold, so she insisted that I sit with the chauffeur and smoke. She's always zealous of my comfort. We went speeding through the shadows and the patches of light, when suddenly I heard a queer little sound. I looked over my shoulder. She was huddled in a heap, shaken by the sobs she was trying to control. I had the car stopped and went to her. She took my hand and called me a foolish boy. After a while she admitted that she had been thinking and wondering, and the significance of the great actress's life had for the moment, just the moment, made every other seem hopelessly gray and barren. She said more that night than she had ever said before, and she made me promise that I would never refer to the subject again. I never have. Bernhardt!" He uttered this with a scoffing laugh. "You remember, Dave, the night my wife recited the confession from 'Phèdre' to us?"

David nodded. His head was bent, and he turned a ring nervously in his fingers.

"Not that I depreciate talent like that of the Divine Sarah's—no, indeed; I'm not so narrow-minded. But suppose that a man had met Bernhardt at the moment when decision had meant everything, and had—well, dragged her down to the commonplace life that thousands of women lead! Don't you think that the remorse he would suffer, if he had any realization of his act, might be hard to endure at times? You're an artist yourself. You've lived among these people always, and you know the poorest

of them have something we others don't have, something we don't even get near, something so great that there's no compensation for its loss."

The puffy lids of Atkinson's eyes closed until only a narrow slit was visible, a habit of moments deeply thoughtful. He flicked the ash again into the patient maw of the crocodile and looked first at David, then at Grant. He was deeply touched by the fineness of their attitude toward the absent woman, but he was also awkward and ill at ease under the burden of the confession. After a moment he rose with a good night gesture. He put his hand heavily on the shoulder of his host, who attempted to rise with him. "Don't stir, old chap." The words signified more than would seem to one ignorant of the context. It was as though he had been initiated into the rites of a secret society, and that the three were really bound together by ties of mutual comprehension from which the world at large was excluded.

When he trod strenuously by the door of Mrs. Grant's room, she was being hooked into a chiffon negligée by her French maid. She listened until she heard his door close with a bang, then ran rapidly downstairs. She wanted to reach the dining room before the men separated. They were sitting opposite each other, deep in thought. They looked up at her soft approach, and the expressions changed instantly to one of delighted welcome. David made some passes with a chair and a cushion, and her husband put out his toe to the bell, ready to ring in case she wanted anything.

She ignored the utilitarian efforts. "I have something to tell you. I couldn't wait." Her smile disclosed teeth still babyish in size and color, and deep, disappearing dimples. The smile was directed toward David this time, and she said, caressingly: "I couldn't shut you out from my confidence, David, after all you've done."

David's wrinkles faded into insignificant lines as she spoke. In moments of deep feeling his face always seemed as if illumined from within by an invisible flame. The sparse coal black hair and



the big mustache made the change grotesque to strangers; to those who knew him it was allied with a rare spiritual quality. The alteration took place now under the burgeoning power of her praise.

"You two dear old things have never asked me why I was so crazy to have Atkinson come here."

They shook their heads with a simultaneous motion of negation. That she, who was avid of genius, should desire to meet one of its preceptors, did not seem a matter for speculation but for help, which they had gladly accorded.

She clasped her hands about the nearest arm, that of her husband, in the excitement of the avowal.

"Why, Atkinson is the man who years ago told me that I would make a great name for myself on the stage."

She hesitated, the lightness gone, a tone of reminiscent seriousness in its place.

Her husband unlocked her hands and held them proudly.

"You mean, Clara, that he is the great—" He recalled long forgotten facts. "Why, I thought that the name was—"

"Oh, yes—Jones. That was his name—Atkinson-Jones. He dropped the 'Jones' and the hyphen after he became celebrated. He was well known then, practically the greatest authority, but there were rivals stepping closely at his heels. Now he has none." She turned to David. "At that time he had brought out Madame Zarolffy, the Roumanian singer. He discovered her in some little village, and in a year she was the wonder of the musical world. The next we knew he had found in Siberia, where she was imprisoned by a jealous husband, a wonderful Russian actress. She has never been to this country, for she's afraid to cross the ocean, but you don't pick up a European paper today without seeing some reference to her. He found one of our greatest Italian tenors shoveling coal. He has never made a mistake. He is intuitive and psychic as well as sophisticated. He doesn't go about seeking talent any more. It seeks him and he tries to avoid it. His word is

law. At the time he listened to me, to get five minutes of his time was a triumph for which there were hundreds of aspirants. Today a word from him, an authentic interview, and a professional's place is practically secured."

The two men tried to recall the conversation that had taken place before Atkinson's withdrawal. They looked embarrassed, and spoke together.

"We were talking about you—"

"Of course he didn't remember me—how could he? When he heard me I had long, straight lines and was eighteen. Now I have curves and—well, it's nearly twenty years ago. I don't suppose I shall let him know; that will depend. If I can stand his look of reproach, perhaps."

She noted the look of misery on her husband's face. "Forgive me, dear; I didn't mean that exactly. If there was a particle of the old feeling I wouldn't speak so—I would not have wanted him to come; but there isn't." Her head danced in the gesture of abandonment. "You remember the night we heard Bernhardt—that marvelous night! It ended then. Always before I believed that some time, when the hour was ripe, I might pick up the old ambition and go on; but after I witnessed that marvel of technique, that perfection of effort and genius, and read behind it all the strife, the sacrifice, the many years' pursuit, I realized that it was too late; and after one mighty protest, one moment's revolt, I bowed to the inevitable. My tears washed away all my disappointment.

"That is why I said that I was not ready to see Atkinson six months ago, when he had just returned to his own country after two decades of absence and everybody was paying him tribute. I remembered too keenly the day I left his office, walking on air and feeling as if I had seen a heavenly messenger. Think, I was so young, and my future hung on his decree; and though I never doubted what it would be, there was a certain exaltation, a stimulation of the faculties. With the splendid audacity of youth I recited the confession from 'Phèdre.' You know how fond you both are of

that. He was so kind, sympathetic and encouraging. He even wrote his verdict on a slip of paper. I have it yet.

"He was tall and slim at that time. He had penetrating eyes that looked into your very soul. They are more reserved now, and worldly. With one glance he would tell what a person's future was to be. He conceals that glance today. And yet, fat and fussy and funny as he is, aren't you still conscious of the something different that marks the great personage? I am. The spirit in that unwieldy body is one that is independent of criticism. I wonder, when I tell him, if I do—" Her voice trailed away into a coo of prophetic satisfaction.

She gathered up her ruffles finally, tapped her husband's shoulder with an admonitory touch suggestive of the lateness of the hour and, with a breezy laugh which cleared the air of its tenseness, led the way. She called David back, as he was starting to ascend the second flight of stairs, to show him the slip of paper which a perfect system of housekeeping allowed her to put her fingers on in a second. It was the verdict Atkinson had written so long ago. It was yellow and the ink faded, but the precise, tiny characters were perfectly legible. They read:

You will be a great success in your chosen calling.

ATKINSON-JONES.

David handled it as one handles a sacred relic. At the tangible evidence of her lifelong sacrifice, his expression was if possible more panegyric than ever. He read and reread the flattering prophecy before he handed it back.

When he entered his room he saw that the door between it and Atkinson's had been left open. He took this as a signal. He slipped off coat and pumps and put on a light coat and slippers, carefully placed in view, his inability to find anything not in eyerange taken cognizance of in domestic arrangements whose details were never obtruded and never obscured.

The scent of the Atkinson cigar led him to the balcony. A pudgy hand holding its duplicate was outstretched,

but not a word was spoken, and David sank into the easy chair, content. He wanted a moment to think, for the confession still rang in his ears. He wished it were possible to beg Atkinson, if the same confession were made to him, that he would not make it any harder for the husband by emphasizing the wrong the wife had done the world of art. Yet he felt that he could not help John Grant by committing such an act of injustice. To deprive her of the little when she had given so much! For the first time in his friendship for the two, he felt drawn by vigorous opposing currents.

Atkinson had the great man's weakness: he liked to assume on the part of his companion a following of his thought as of his word. He commenced abruptly:

"I didn't recognize her at first, though my memory's considered pretty fair for that sort of thing. Yet I was haunted all the time by a vague feeling that we'd met. It commenced the moment she came into the hall and welcomed me so prettily. There was a turn of the head, a certain freedom of gesture and that quick, alert walk. Her voice, too—but I'm not one to ask questions. I like to wait and let the thoughts unfold. They're sure to if you give them time. It's doubly interesting when you've been about the way I have in every country in the world and with all sorts of people. But I couldn't place her until Grant spoke of her reciting 'Phèdre' to you men. 'Phèdre'! I remembered then. The whole picture came back to me without a detail missing."

The night was still. Stormclouds were brushing their swift way across a pale moon. In his self-communing Atkinson had likened it to an actress's face when the make-up was washed off. There was a dark line of trees outlining the horizon, and in the foreground the raucous cry of a crow was the only sound making with its occasional intrusion the silence more intense. The odor of heavy blossoms rose and mingled with the fragrance of the cigars. The voice of Atkinson, sonorous and big, rolled as from a mimic stage into a vast auditorium. It was perfectly audible to the couple in the room below, who had

seated themselves at the open window to gain the poise lost in the excitement of the downstairs scene.

So unreal this message of the darkness, the night and the hush, that it suggested no convention of withdrawal from a conversation not intended to be overheard. It was as if a "wireless" hummed by ears tuned to its meaning. Although not a gesture was made, husband and wife were conscious of the mutual eagerness for David's response.

It came at last, no less audible though pitched in a lower key and in hesitating syllables:

"She is not sure that she will tell you. That wasn't her idea in inviting you here."

"I hope she won't."

The cigar had been removed from Atkinson's lips, and the ejaculation was like a thunderclap. They felt rather than heard David's timid interrogation, "Why?" and the reply:

"Because I should have to tell her a lie—as I did before."

"Before!"

Atkinson loosened his collar and his great chest expanded with the inhaling of his breath. He leaned his arms on the balcony sill, and throwing away the end of his cigar, watched the progress of the burning arc to the grass of the lawn.

"It just shows what a moment's weakness may accomplish. Personally I believe more harm is done by a lack of decision at the right time than by active wrongdoing, but that's neither here nor there. When that man married that woman he was going along, as I understand it, in a commonplace, contented way. Now he's the head of a great corporation, and he's lost strength and peace of mind and happiness in a struggle to make good with something that never existed.

"Why, that woman never had talent enough to fill the head of a squirrel. I knew it when she came to me, before she had spoken a word; but I let her go away believing that she was destined to set the world on fire with her genius, because she happened to be pretty and clever and possessed a convincing personality which has deceived everybody

all her life into the belief that she's of bigger caliber than she is. It has deceived herself as well.

"I was under obligations to a theatrical chap who had received a favor from her father. After his death the little girl had to do something, and she appealed to Walker. She had him, all right. He thought she was the real thing sure, without hearing her recite a word. I studied her through an aperture in the curtain of my reception room. It was a way I had then to save time and get a line on the applicants. I listed her at once, the sort of girl that suggests wrappers—'matinees' is the swell word now, ain't it?—in middle age. She was eating chocolate bonbons and reading a novel. There was none of the nervous dread of latent genius, but I braced up to the ordeal, for I had promised Walker and he was an awfully decent chap. It was an ordeal, all right, to add a useless specimen to the dramatic rot dinned into my ears daily.

"She was cocksure. She believed that I was a necessary instrument in her ongoing, that was all. After the preliminaries she got up and commenced to recite 'Phèdre.' Gawd! 'Phèdre'—think of that!

"Well, I listened. I knew my cue all right, but I didn't take it. I couldn't. There was something so captivating about her. She had the diabolical freshness of youth—you know what that is. It's like crushing a butterfly to hurt it ever so little, so I let her repeat another little piece. I don't remember what that was. I don't believe I listened. Then I wrote something on a slip of paper and got rid of her. I knew the end to such lack of talent was quick and sure, but I left it to the next one to deceive her. I didn't want to see the dimples close up and the light go out of the blue eyes and an air of disappointment replace that of hope. I was weak, but we're all cowards when it comes to telling a pretty woman the truth. I've got over it somehow, or else there aren't as many pretty women.

"While she was taking an elaborate farewell a poor little thing slipped by us into the room. I'd chased her away and

cursed her and refused to listen, and each time she'd come crawling back. She didn't believe in herself, but she did in me. She was scared to death. She was half starved, and her eyes had the look of a dog that's been tied to a can and chased through hot city streets by a gang of hoodlums, but, Lord, she had it all right—she had it!”

Atkinson leaned over and whispered a famous name to David, as though he could not trust the fidelity of the silence. “Yes, sir, all that stuff about her being a Russian countess imprisoned by a jealous husband in Siberia is rot—just clever press agent work. That's the true history of the way she commenced, and now the world's at her feet and she kicks it just as she was kicked. I don't blame her. She treats me worse than the rest, and I don't blame her for that, either. Genius has got some rights.

“The other—your Mrs. Grant—did not come back. Oh, no, she didn't see any necessity, and so I forgot all about her until one night Walker and I were sitting in the garden of the Kursaal at Interlaken. The orchestra was playing something from ‘Il Pagliacci’ and that made me think of Madame Zarolffy. Nedda was one of her great roles, and the one I tried her in that day to get the taste of the other girl's flat failure out of my mouth. You know the way your mind works. Thinking of her and that talented outburst made me think of the other girl, and I asked Walker about her. It was as I had prophesied. She was hard up, there was no engagement pending and a chap came along and asked her to marry him. She saw a chance for shelter and took it, as that kind always will. Walker acknowledged that he'd fooled himself; that she had only the strawberry festival kind of talent that starts a subscription among credulous villagers to send Mayme or Dotty or Edythe to the city with the hope that she will come back in two years to blow off the township to a season of grand opera and, incidentally, one hundred and fifty per cent on the money invested. Lord, there's tons of them! I'm glad I don't have to listen any more.”

Atkinson finished with a great yawn.

“If you've got it, nothing will stand in its way; nothing ever has and nothing ever will. Life will offer you bribes, home, the love of wife or husband and of children—it makes no difference, the lure is greater. You lie beaten in the dust. You are parched with hunger and thirst. You die daily of soul bitterness; your eyes are dim and the goal cannot be seen; something stronger than weariness, than defeat, than hunger of soul and body, drives, and you obey its voice. I know, for I've seen. Kill it! You can't kill it, man—it's immortal!

“But the other kind, the picayune talent that stops to pick the first bunch of primroses, the world's full of; and the sad part is that there are thousands of masculine souls withering in the light of a supposed feminine superiority. It's different with men; when they don't make good, they keep quiet.”

Atkinson slipped his feet out of his shoes. He leaned over and picked them up, one in each hand. He waited for David to say something, but David could not. He was staring with fixed eyes into the darkness. He was visualizing a life of toil and sacrifice as he had seen it, and his heart was sick.

Atkinson lumbered heavily to an upright position. “Never mind, old chap, it's too late now. It'll have to go on. I might tell but I won't. I know what is going to happen. She'll fix it all up in a carefully prepared *mise en scène*, with you and husband in the background listening to her dramatic story. When she gets through I'll pat her on the back or shake a protesting finger, sink into an abyss of gloomy silence for a moment or possibly lie outright as I did before. You have my permission to tell her after I've gone, but you won't. I know you. The first word'll choke you, and that'll dam the rest. I'm sorry for your future, Dave, with that tender conscience.”

He slipped into his room through the French window and commenced to prepare for bed, with an admonitory cough, suggesting that the time for David's withdrawal was at hand.

Downstairs the tension was over. Mrs. Grant rose and staggered forward,

half falling against a chair and recovering her balance with an effort. Her husband, after a moment's dazed indecision, followed and mechanically turned on the lights that illumined the room through rose glass. They showed her, in spite of their kindly shading, with face drawn and mouth awry, as if from some physical convulsion. Her eyes glanced furtively about as if she had been shocked by a terrible vision and feared its return. Something had gone from the body, a suppleness, a surety which had marked her most trivial gestures; it seemed withered like the body of an old woman, feeble and uncertain. She swayed toward him and then away. Outside from the garden came the cry of the crow, sounding like the satanic triumph over a lost soul.

Suddenly he seized her in his arms. His embrace closed about her like a vise. It was not the caress of the past, given tentatively, allowed only as reward for gracious doings. It had in it neither triumph, passion nor regret. He was choked with hate for the man in the room above who had hurt her. He felt her need, and for the first time his own need of protecting the woman he loved. He muttered words of endearment as to a child who had been knocked down by an irresistible, careless force.

She did not repulse him, but leaned heavily against the spare shoulder with its desk stoop. Once she put her hand to her face and then touched his cheek with it. He felt it warm with tears, the first he had ever caused her to shed



## DIDACTIC DEFINITIONS

By Milton Goldsmith

**ELOCUTION**—That which teaches men how to speak, but, unfortunately, not what to say.

**POWDER**—That which soldiers waste when they miss and women when they kiss.

**CONTORTIONIST**—One who leads a double life and is bent on making a show of himself.

**DEATH**—That which cancels many debts, with the aid of a life insurance policy.

**SPINSTER**—A matchless woman.

**HEIRESS**—One whose face is her husband's fortune.

**KISS**—An improper noun which few girls care to decline.

**MATRIMONY**—A holy rite in which the participants often get wholly left.



**THE** average woman expects to meet none but her own exclusive set in Heaven; the average man expects to meet none but total strangers.

# SNAPSHOTS AT LIFE

By Sophie Irene Loeb

**M**OST women who are attracted to a man before marriage find they are distracted after marriage.

Never try to rekindle an old flame—there is nothing so dead as a dead love.

Love is the only game where hearts are always trumps.

Most women, when they can't get the man they care for, care for the man they can get.

To a coquette all's well that spends well.

Do right and fear no man; don't write and fear no woman.

The educated conscience is the newest microbe of evolution.

What a blessing that mirrors are silent!

Jealousy is largely a matter of self-conceit.

Only a wallflower blushes unseen.

Some people we remember, and some we recall.

The line of least resistance is to most people the lifeline.

These days Mary doesn't lose her little lamb until he is well shorn.

People who continually talk about their family trees forget to tell about the fallen leaves.

Once married, always suspected.



“**A**ND so, after inviting your friends to a game dinner, you were not served with any part of the bird!”  
“Oh, yes; I got the bill.”



# KNIGHT GASTON

By W. L. and Mrs. W. L. George

**M**ADEMOISELLE FALLOUX was bothered. As Jane Weston called up to her to inquire whether she was coming down to tea, all she obtained was a vision of Mademoiselle Falloux's head thrust through the window in irrelevant answer.

"Don't speak to me. Don't speak to me. He'll be here in half an hour. If Hilda is with you, ask her to come to me at once." Mademoiselle Falloux was a healthy, robust-looking woman of forty or thereabouts, fresh-faced, fair-haired and brisk by profession as well as by temperament, for she was a teacher of French in the girls' high school at Gorton-on-Trent, and compelled, as are all who teach French, to be funny, erratic and excitable. Her friend, Miss Weston, on receipt of the message, went slowly into the house. As an English mistress in the same school dignity was as constantly demanded of her as it was denied her friend, and she sustained her part in her well cut blue serge coats, her gold-rimmed *pince-nez* and general air of trimness and cleanliness.

Jane Weston, Hilda's sister, the youngest and best-looking of the party, thus became the sole occupant of the little French garden, which she noted with a smile of relief. Sliding still lower in her deck chair, she crossed her hands behind her and tilted her eyes upward until she could see nothing but the sky. She was tired today, she told herself. How else could she be feeling so critical and captious? Was it not holiday time? (She also taught in the school at Gorton-on-Trent.) Was not everything being designed for her enjoyment, and were not her sister and her friend intent upon restoring to her the health an operation

for appendicitis had cost her? Mademoiselle Falloux, out of the kindness of her heart, was entertaining both Hilda and Jane in her cottage at Garville, so that she, Jane, should benefit by the light French air; while Hilda, though three months had elapsed since the operation, would not yet allow her to fasten a hook or put in a hairpin for herself. It must be sheer weakness of body then that made her feel alternately cross and inclined to cry when Mademoiselle Falloux found a wasp in her teacup and drowned it to the accompaniment of much shrill laughter, or when Hilda read extracts from Baedeker relating to Chartres Cathedral, which she proposed to visit on her bicycle before she left France.

Jane's feet stirred restlessly and she unlocked her hands while her eyes returned to earth. Her surroundings were certainly pretty in an unpretentious way. In the foreground a white cat was washing herself beside the old pump flanked by two rose trees, now a glowing mass of bloom. The old wall that bounded the garden was clad in ivy and sweet smelling honeysuckle; the roadway was flanked with poplars, green and golden in the evening sunlight. Further on were the village roofs and the church spire outlined between the trees, and beyond them a distant ribbon of the road, winding away to Chartres.

It was in the nursing home that she had realized how much she disliked teaching, a tiresome fact to obtrude itself when, as far as she could see, teaching must suffice for her occupation and her livelihood for the remainder of her days. She had found out, too, that she was getting old. She had just cele-

brated her twenty-eighth birthday. That was horribly near thirty, when the world would be justified in classing her as an old maid. Mademoiselle Falloux and her sister were old maids already, for they were both of them over forty. They did not mind; they almost boasted of the fact, made a joke of it. Jane had never definitely contemplated matrimony, but somehow she had unconsciously hoped that there would some day be a happening in her life, a thing that would change the gray to gold for a little, some man who would look into her eyes and find them beautiful, at whose coming her heart would beat faster and everything be new and different. There were very few men in Gorton-on-Trent, and those among them who associated with the teachers were all married. At holiday time she and her sister took rooms in some country village or in some obscure seaside place where they knew nobody. At Christmas they visited two aunts in London, old maids who entertained the vicar of their parish at dinner on Christmas day. It was absurd to think of any happenings in which men were involved.

"We have made his bed," cried Mademoiselle Falloux from the open doorway.

"I was quite forgetting," said Jane, "that a man is coming to sleep under our roof tonight."

"A man! Oh, you mean Gaston, my nephew," said Mademoiselle Falloux. "But you can hardly call him a man. He is only eighteen. When I saw him last he was wearing knickerbockers."

"Well," interrupted Hilda, "somebody is now leaving the high road and walking down the path toward this house. It is certainly a man, and who else but your nephew would arrive at this hour?"

"It is Gaston! I see him! I know him by his walk!" cried Mademoiselle Falloux. She rushed to the gate to greet the dark-haired, dark-eyed young man and to kiss him vigorously on both cheeks.

"It is a pity Frenchmen always wear their hats too small for them," said Jane Weston lazily. "Otherwise he might be quite good-looking."

"He must be more than eighteen," said Hilda, almost resentfully. "I don't think Félicité would have invited him here with us had she known he was a man!"

## II

It was two days later, and Gaston Falloux sat in the deck chair. He was a handsome young man, with his dark eyes, dark hair and short, crisp mustache, well dressed in his way, though he was mistaken in thinking he would have passed anywhere for an Englishman. For one thing, his clothes, though well cut, were just a little tight; his boots were far too long and pointed in the toe, and his tie, a piece of white brocade patterned with fern leaves, was not of the kind sold in Piccadilly. Happily for himself, he was not aware of these shortcomings, for he was very self-conscious and at an age when it would have cost him a pang to have found out that the Westons in no wise looked upon him as a typical Anglo-Saxon. So he sat in the little garden well contented with his appearance. Yet as he pulled very hard at his Maryland cigarette, he wondered whether he should write to his mother and tell her he must join her at Trouville immediately, for his experiment in rusticity and the simple life was resulting in disastrous failure.

From the cottage beside him came the cheerful sounds of domestic labor. The maid sang as she burnished the copper saucepans; in the bedroom above Hilda Weston talked incessantly as she made the beds with Mademoiselle Falloux, the latter laughing at everything and nothing and every now and then putting her head out of the window to retail the jokes to her nephew. Jane Weston alone gave no sign of existence. Presumably she was still in bed, for so far she had not appeared before the twelve o'clock *déjeuner*. Gaston began to wish she would get up and come down and talk to him, for his English was nearly as fluent as his French, and he always enjoyed hearing himself talk in what he called "*la langue de Shakespeare*." Yes, there was no doubt about it, he hated this little French village, so like every

other French village he had ever seen; and he hated his Aunt Félicité, with her inane giggle, her untidy, careless ways.

He did not like Hilda Weston, either; she was too stiff, too prim. He disliked the way in which she pulled her hair off her forehead, her trick of showing all her teeth when she spoke, the hard dryness of her complexion and the wrinkles made by her *pince-nez* across the bridge of her nose. It depressed him to think that in a few years Jane would be very like her sister. It seemed sad somehow, for at one time she must have been quite pretty; she was pretty still now and then, when the lamplight shone on her light brown hair, or when she smiled, for the curves of her mouth were beautiful and now and then a dimple appeared in her cheek. It was indeed sad to think that in a few years she would be just like Hilda, parched, weather-beaten, that her hair would recede further from her forehead, her teeth grow long and show their roots. If she married, of course, she would not age in this manner; Gaston already knew enough of women to realize that. If she married her slender frame would probably fill out, her arms and bust would become rounded, the skin of her face soft and pink. He could imagine her in fact quite beautiful. But would she marry? They managed these things so badly in England and the girl clearly had no *dot* or she would not be teaching in a school. She would have made such a good wife too, responsive, charming, grateful, with enough intellect to keep her husband from getting bored. Sometimes even he had thought to discern a gleam of passion in those curious weary-looking eyes, a suggestion that she was sleeping rather than dead and that, if the Fairy Prince kissed her she would awake as a resplendent glorified being.

He looked up and found the girl he was criticizing standing by his side. She was certainly not pretty in the strong morning light; her complexion looked quite sallow and there were purplish shadows under her eyes. As she spoke she hesitated and moved her fingers in a nervous manner that displeased him.

"Mademoiselle Falloux wishes to know if you will go to the farm and fetch the milk. It is not very far—just at the end of the road."

Gaston frowned; like most Latins, he disliked exercise in any form. "Is there nobody else to go?" he questioned. "Why not send Marie?"

"She is busy in the kitchen. She cleans all her saucepans this morning."

"I will go." He smiled boldly into her timid face. "I will go if you will come with me."

"Oh, but—" In a second the sallow face became rosy.

"It is too long a walk. Pardon me. I forgot that you are not well."

"No, no; I am quite strong again now, only I thought—" The color in her face deepened. She could not tell him that it was against the habits of a lifetime to walk with any man unless her sister were by her side.

"I will come," she said at length. A few minutes later they were together and Gaston was talking with such vivacity and with so much deference that Jane forgot to be shy. On their return journey they carried the milk can between them. It was full and its contents tended to overflow. Once, in adjusting it, Gaston laid a firm hand over Jane's white, transparent fingers. Cruel though it might be, he could not resist the temptation of making her blush, if only to note her tortured expression as she tried to conceal her blushes. Then he wanted to smoke, and the milk can was set down in the roadway so that he might light a match.

"It is an English cigarette," he explained—"a Three Castles." And he tried to persuade her to try one. But she shook her head and reminded him that she had to set an example to her pupils. And he propounded for her the new gospel of individualism, which clashed so queerly with his socialistic views, that every being was free to do exactly what he pleased, and that consideration for others was mere weakness. Jane's cheeks were flushed and her eyes were glowing by the time they reached the cottage.

"You look very hot," said Hilda as

she relieved her of the milk can. "I am sure your temperature is up again. I insist upon your coming in and lying down for half an hour or we shall have you ill again."

Gaston sat down and wrote a long letter to his mother, for, like most young Frenchmen, his sense of filial duty was strongly developed. But he did not suggest joining her at Trouville.

### III

MISS WESTON and Mademoiselle Falloux had gone to Chartres on their bicycles. This expedition had served as a topic at meals for several days. They had wondered whether they should take lunch or go to the Grand Monarque, whether they should take milk in bottles or content themselves with coffee when they arrived, whether they would cycle both ways or only one, whether they would attend afternoon service in the cathedral and thus put back the evening meal for half an hour. On one point, however, Mademoiselle Falloux was quite decided, and that was that Gaston should accompany them. It was a duty to her brother to see that her nephew visited the cathedral before he returned to Paris. Gaston fell in with their plans without demur, and gallantly set out with the two ladies in a pair of very tight knickerbockers and such a diminutive cap that even his aunt remarked on it and warned him against a possible sunstroke. Generally any pleasantries on the subject of his appearance called up a scowl, but this morning he was so amiable that it seemed impossible to mar his serenity. Thus they had all left, a noisy and seemingly very cheerful party, so much so that Jane, who was not allowed to go, felt quite disconsolate as she picked up her deck chair and her novel and removed them to the cherry orchard at the far end of the garden. It was about half an hour later, and she was still sitting listless and idle, when Gaston returned.

"My bicycle," he explained— "a bad puncture."

"And you had to come back? What

a pity!" said Jane sympathetically. "Could you not have mended it?"

"No." He shook his head emphatically. "The nearest village was seven miles away, and I had nothing to mend it with myself."

"It was a pity you couldn't go," she repeated. "And your aunt had set her heart upon your seeing the cathedral before you went back to Paris."

He looked at her with a whimsical lift of his eyebrows. "Perhaps I hadn't set my heart upon seeing the cathedral as firmly as she had. Perhaps I was reserving it for something quite different."

"Oh, Monsieur Falloux!" She gave a little gasp and grew very red, hardly knowing whether to be annoyed or flattered by the implication. He did not tell her that he had himself lacerated the tire with his penknife, or that he had never really intended to make one of the expedition. He flung himself down in the long grass at her feet, lit a cigarette and, taking the novel she had been reading as a text, fired off a series of high sounding paradoxes on the romantic and the realistic schools of novelists. Presently, when she had forgotten to be shy or to ask herself whether she was doing right in enjoying his company, he picked up a cherry and threw it up at her crying, "Catch."

She caught it mechanically, and he threw her another.

She caught this, too, a little proud of her prowess, and she began to explain to him that she had played cricket and that she had always been known as a good fielder. But Gaston took no interest in athletics, and he did not wish to betray to this English girl his total ignorance of cricket. Instead of listening to her, he picked up more cherries and began to throw them at her faster and faster, vowing that he would make her eat all those that she did not catch. In a few minutes the cherries were bombarding her from all sides, striking her head, her neck and arms until a particularly well aimed one found its mark in the dimple in her cheek.

"Eat!" he cried impetuously. "You shall eat them all!" And he tried to force a cherry into her laughing mouth.

She struck out at him with unexpected vigor, for her long arms, though thin, were muscular. Then he tried to catch hold of her hands, and again she eluded him, but in so doing lost her balance and fell into the long grass beside him, where they struggled together like a couple of kittens, laughing and fighting, until Jane's hair fell in a long, thick rope down her neck and Gaston's collar flew wide of its stud. And then quite suddenly the spirit of the game changed; it was a game no longer. They had ceased to laugh, and Gaston was no longer thrusting cherries into her mouth. He was still holding her, but, instead of pushing her, he was straining her toward him, straining her so tightly that she could feel his heart beating against her ribs. Nor was she struggling or attempting to free herself; she was acquiescing, letting him draw her to him, resting in his arms, a supine, languid burden. In a moment, he told himself with thrilling expectation, he would touch her lips. And then Marie's apron showed a big splotch of white against the trunks of the trees, and her high pitched voice came shrilling through the silence.

*"Mademoiselle, le déjeuner est servi. Il ne faut pas laisser gâter votre omelette!"*

Gaston's hands relaxed their hold; Jane sat up and laughed a little hysterically as she discovered the condition of her hair. She was as white now as she had been red before, and as she groped in the grass for her hairpins Gaston noted that her fingers were trembling. In silence they returned to the cottage. It was a mushroom omelette, Marie explained, and the mushrooms were the first of the season. She had risen at five in the morning to pick them for mademoiselle, who was going to be so lonely all day. She continued to stand and talk to them, while Gaston ate the greater part of the omelette, and Jane looked at the tiny portion on her own plate and hoped the other two would not notice the difficulty she had in swallowing it.

"I must go and lie down," she said when at length she had disposed of it.

"I promised Hilda I would rest this afternoon."

"All the afternoon?" he cried in consternation.

"Well, till about four. They said they would be back about four, didn't they?"

She left him smiling at the *naïveté* of this remark, at her implicit confession of weakness. It was all part of her, this delicious innocence which matched so oddly with her years. No man, he could swear that, had ever held her in his arms before; no man, he was certain, had ever kissed her. It was cruel of Marie to have disturbed them in the orchard; but no matter—the opportunity still held good. Tonight he would persuade her to come for a walk with him. Then they would go down the poplar-shrouded lane, and in the shadow of the giant trees he would hold her to him again, and this time he would kiss her flowerlike mouth. And then? Then he would kiss her again and yet again, until the shyness faded out of her eyes and they glowed with responsive gratitude, until some of the years of her wasted womanhood were avenged.

#### IV

"AND that night," said Jane Weston, finishing her story abruptly, "she died. That was all—the end."

Jane and Gaston were sitting together, as was now their daily custom during the morning while the others attended to their various domestic duties. This morning, however, Jane had been later than usual in making her appearance, and, when she had found him alone, had shown signs of returning immediately to the house. To prevent this Gaston had abruptly turned the conversation on Gorton-on-Trent and life in the English provincial towns, gradually leading her on to tell him a little of her own life. And so insinuating had been his method that after a little he had won from her this most intimate of all her reminiscences, the story of the little girl who had typhoid and whom, contrary to all regulations, she had nursed night and day only to see her die in her arms.

"You must have been very fond of her," said Gaston.

"I was. I loved her desperately," Jane admitted. "A little I should imagine in the way a mother loves her child. She was everything to me. I can't tell you why, for to the others she was quite ordinary." She paused and continued after a little: "I have never loved anything like that again. Perhaps I couldn't, or perhaps it is merely the opportunity that has been lacking." Her thoughts returned to her one emotional adventure, and her eyes became full of tears.

Gaston observed her narrowly. He had drawn this little story out of her unawares, and he was now diagnosing its significance in relation to herself. "You are rash," he said at length, "unwise. After all, life is for the living. Love while you may—anything or anybody. In front of us all stretches the great darkness. Let us laugh in the light while it still shines."

"Yes, I know—I know," she assented. "It would be so much better if one could. But with me it has always been all or nothing; I can't make reservations."

"What are you two talking about?" inquired Mademoiselle Falloux, suddenly thrusting her head through the top window. "Gaston, Hilda wants to know if you can get your bicycle mended in time to go with her to Avenau this evening. It is a pretty village, and there is a church with a crypt full of skulls."

Gaston hesitated, wondering how long he could postpone the finding of his puncture outfit. This evening he was reserving for Jane, for the walk in the poplar-shrouded lane. The last words of the girl were still sounding in his ears—"All or nothing; I can't make reservations." And this was the girl he intended to kiss and to leave the following week! It was ridiculous, this note of idealism, so characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon temperament, so remote from the sensuous lightness of the Latins—ridiculous and at the same time fine, splendid. He continued to look from his aunt's tumbled fair head to

Jane's demure one, now bent a little to hide her tears. And as he looked his mood changed. No, he wouldn't take her walking along the lane that evening; he wouldn't take her out at all. He would go fishing by himself away from everybody, where he could sit on the bank and think.

He declined his aunt's proposal on the ground that his bicycle was not yet mended, and told her what he proposed to do instead.

"Fishing!" Mademoiselle Falloux fell in with the notion at once; he had not yet explored the beauties of the little river Sorgue. What a pity it was that the rest of the party were not provided with rods! As it was, they must content themselves with watching the sport and with bringing him tea on the river bank. "You will not find it too long a walk, will you, Jane?" she ended up kindly.

"Oh, no," Jane said eagerly. "I am quite strong now."

She had quite forgiven Gaston his part in the episode of the cherries, telling herself she had exaggerated its importance, found in it a significance which had not been there. Gaston, however, showed no enthusiasm for the plan. "I shall go a long way," he said almost brusquely. "Possibly beyond the bend of the river."

"Oh, we shall find you," said Mademoiselle Falloux cheerfully.

He continued to look doubtful. Finally, seeing no way to dissuade them, he went into the house to look for his fishing tackle and left without saying another word. No, he told himself as he strode across the water meadows, there certainly would be no walk along the lane that evening with a girl who made no reservations, who staked her life to win all or lose all. This woman of twenty-eight had the heart of a romantic school-girl! How then, without being guilty of deliberate cruelty, could he kiss her and tell her he loved her, when in another week or so he would pass out of her life forever? She did not love him yet, or if she did she did not know it. *La Belle au Bois Dormant* still slept, though perhaps in her subconsciousness she was dimly



aware that her knight was riding toward her through the forest. Yet, until his kiss was on her lips, he thought, she would not stir. Later perhaps, in the cold gray daylight, she might vaguely remember his passing as a pleasant dream. He reached the bend of the river, chose a likely spot, baited and cast. Fishing as an occupation bored him at any time, and the poor little gudgeon and dace which were all the Sorgue offered seemed hardly worth catching. He did not remember ever having put himself out to this extent for anybody in the world, and petulant lines showed on his forehead and mouth as he wondered how long he would find it his duty to stay there.

After awhile he found he was getting stiff, turned to rub the muscles of his right leg and saw that only a short hundred yards divided him from the rest of the party. As he was wondering how to get rid of the intruders, he caught his line in a clump of nettles, and carelessly stooping to disentangle it, he pitched head foremost into the middle of the river. Fortunately the stream was not deep, nor was the current strong, but he had to swim a stroke or so to reach the shore, and even then it took him some minutes to clamber up the slippery bank. When at last he stood on dry ground the only one of the party he could see was his aunt, who was running toward him with a teacup in her hand. They had all seen the accident, it seemed, and the sight of it had been too much for poor Jane Weston in her delicate state of health, for she had fainted on the spot. Mademoiselle Falloux had come to fetch water to revive her while her sister supported her and unfastened her blouse. By the time they returned with the water Jane was already sitting up. She was still livid, and beads of perspiration were rolling off her forehead, but it was evident that her heart was again beating regularly and that she was recovering.

"But I thought—" she murmured weakly under her breath as she saw Gaston. And across her face flitted for a brief moment the smile of rapture he had thought to kindle by his kiss. He un-

derstood. It was too late. She already loved him.

## V

Was it too late? All the evening Gaston had asked himself that question, and now it was midnight and he had found no answer. Was it too late to save Jane from falling in love with him? If she loved him now, and in spite of himself his heart beat faster at the thought, she would love him forever; she had said as much. She would go back to Gorton-on-Trent and continue to teach little girls in the high school, and all the while, the years ebbing away in gray monotony, she would carry his image in her heart. He would like, he thought, to have figured thus to somebody as an eternally romantic memory; he would like to think of this woman's heart as a shrine where the lamps burned perpetually in his honor; it would have flattered his vanity. At the same time he felt that such a thing must not be; he must prevent it if he could. If her life had not been so circumscribed, her chances of meeting other men so few, he might have risked it; as it was, he felt like a spy, a would-be thief to whom a trusting woman has confided all the secret hiding places of her poor little store of treasure. And for once in his life he cursed his fertile imagination, the feminine intuition on which he had hitherto relied so securely in his dealings with women. At last, telling himself for the fiftieth time that if this romantic girl loved him there was the end so far as he was concerned, he flung off his coat and prepared to go to bed.

But as he was undressing a new and subtle thought crept in, and again the situation was modified. This girl loved him as she saw him, as he appeared to her. Supposing then he could disguise himself, appear to her differently, conceal those qualities which appealed to her delicate imagination or substitute for them ugly gross defects, what then? He might show himself as a ribald drunkard; that would disgust her quickly enough. Or he might be blunt, boorish, sulky, snub her on every occasion; but that attitude, too, would require a good

deal of sustaining. Besides, the time for disillusioning her was short, for every hour the illusion lived it gained strength. He must kill it at once, on the spot. Ah, he was coming to it at last; the metaphor had helped! He must kill it so to speak before it was born. This idea that she loved him had hardly yet had time to take root in her own mind; he would tread it out of being before it could truly be said to have lived. *He* would make the avowal; the declaration of love should come from him; he would woo her in terms that would make himself ridiculous and her not a little ashamed of ever having thought of taking him seriously. Then she would hate him and her salvation would be assured.

An hour later he had written his love letter, a masterpiece of extravagance and bathos. In ridiculous high flown terms he raved of her beauty and of his passion for her, vowing that he could not live without her, that all his life was in her hands. He was lyrical, pagan. When he read the letter through he was surprised at himself, for he had not known he had it in him to reproduce so accurately the ravings of a precocious neurotic schoolboy. But of its success he was certain. It would disgust Jane. All the reticence, the pride in her would rise in protest; her sturdy Northern temperament would never tolerate anything so blatant, so Latin and so vulgar.

He put the letter in an envelope and pushed it under her door. He was very tired; his young face showed quite pale in the looking glass and his eyes were swollen. He had never reduced himself to such a state of physical fatigue for anyone before. It was too bad, he thought, that all his cynicism should have failed him when he needed it most, that an ingenue of twenty-eight should have completely routed him.

In the pale dawn he got up to repair his punctured tire, for he had yet to send himself a telegram bidding him rejoin his mother at Trouville at once. This

was delivered to him at the breakfast table.

He had finished his packing and was waiting in the garden to say good-bye to his aunt when Jane Weston appeared. Her eyes were red with crying and her cheeks pale and sunken, but she carried her head high and it was evident she intended to face the situation.

"Well," he said boldly, hoping she would not notice his nervousness, "did you get my letter?"

"How dared you?" Her eyes glistered with scorn and fury; she showed her teeth a little. "How dared you write such a thing? What ever made you think that I should be gulled by high sounding phrases? What reason had I given you to think that I—that I was in love with you? It will be a lesson to me in the future to be less kind to boys. Yes, boys!" she repeated savagely as she saw that her thrust had told. "I have made a great mistake, but I see it all now. You see, I have had a good deal of experience in dealing with school-girls, but my experience of boys has been limited."

Gaston did not defend himself. For a moment he was conscious of a great longing to take her in his arms, if only to assert his virility, to show her that at any rate he had the physical strength to woo her as a man. He turned aside, bit his lip and looked at his watch. "I must go," he said. "I must go at once if I am to catch that train. Will you say good-bye to my aunt for me?"

Then he held out his hand. "Good-bye, Miss Weston. Will you not let us part as friends?"

"Oh, friends, certainly!" She laughed lightly. "Why not? When do you go back to the Lycée? I expect your mother will be glad when the holidays are over."

He went out smiling bravely. Was he not a knight who had rescued a maiden from imminent peril? And she would never know. That was his crown.



"HUDSON has erected a mausoleum in which to store his rejected writings."  
 "Yes; he calls it his manuscript."

# JEALOUSY

By Robert Otto

**S**CARLET FEVER fills several pages in any good encyclopedia, and Jealousy hardly half a page. What an irony of fate! Scarlet fever, which touches only the surface of human life, meets with medical attention, kindly nurses, speedy recovery and a gentle death, when Nature is implacable. Jealousy, on the other hand, which fills all the large spaces of men's and women's lives, tears, singes and poisons their innermost souls, persecutes them cruelly and fiendlike drags from the darkest recesses their frightened, fleeting sentiments—jealousy, I say, looks in vain for comfort and help, for it meets only with scorn and contempt. Pacifying death, yea, even the very wish to recover, is denied it. Prometheus was forged to the rock because he had snatched fire from Heaven and had breathed it into damp humanity, and a vulture was gnawing at his vitals. Love is that fire, which the gods envy men, and jealousy is the gnawing vulture which fearfully avenges the theft.

The jealousy of men must be distinguished from that of women. Their source is the same, but they flow in different channels, and—that we may perfect the simile—the banks which they wash are as immeasurably different as is their outcome. A man does not hate his rivals; a woman detests hers. The jealousy of a man is a stormy sea, inundating everything and filling him completely, body and soul. That of a woman is a narrow, rapid and treacherous river, hiding its depth. The jealous man is an angry lion; he is noble, and hunger alone compels him to tear his victim. The jealous woman is a vicious snake; she is vain, and wantonness in-

duces her to bite. The object of the jealous man's animosity is the person he has loved, and whom he now ceases to love; that of the jealous woman is her rival, so that her former love is magnified. Jealousy makes of a man a fool, a caricature, and lessens him in the eyes of his lady, while it increases a woman's interest, charm and attractiveness.

Just as music is a supernatural joy, and men who perceive it experience at one time all the joys of the universe, just so jealousy is a superhuman pain, and the breast which is filled by it feels the combined sorrows of all created things. Spurned love is death. Jealousy is more—it is the fruit of death.

Women do not know how to value the love of men, and because they give everything that is truly their own, they imagine they have paid full price. They are continually deceived, thinking that their love is the greater, for they fancy to be giving when in reality they are receiving. The woman only lives when she loves; she first finds herself when she loses herself in man. Her heart is created empty; nothing in it has to give way to the image of the beloved man. His soul, however, is filled and animated, and he has to displace a world before he can receive in it the object of his love. He sacrifices to the woman all his senses, his plans and his hopes. His sentiments are waters; his thoughts are ships passing to and fro on them, and in the ships he brings to his loved one all the joys and forces of life. He has given his entire property into one little hand, and if his love is spurned or betrayed, he finds neither nourishment nor shelter, for he is bared of everything. Shall the unfortunate man sink his grief in

the whirlpool of his senses? The cruel waves raise him and hurl him back to land. Shall he divert himself with the activities of the mind? Even these he has sacrificed to her. His world is lifeless without people; his pulses stop when her heart has stopped to beat for him.

When every bodily ailment has its cure, and even the moods of a friend find a comforter, why is there for the most fearful of all ills neither help nor solace? Why does the jealous man meet neither with a remedy nor with sympathy? Because his presence is threatening and evil, for wherever he is, there snakes are lurking under the roses of social pleasure. Loving, he has rested his whole life on the heart of a woman, and if this support is shaken or broken, he is hurled down into empty space. The bigger he is and the more virtues he possesses, the more irresistible is his fall and the more dangerous to those who happen to encounter him. This is why he is shunned, for he is like a bomb. Every other weakness, every vice, yes, even an evil deed, may be condoned, because they attack only a part of him, and there may be enough left for some friendship or esteem. But he who is ill with jealousy finds his whole system polluted, and like a bad creditor is unable to pay any of his debts to life or to his fellowmen. How can a man expect love when he is incapable of feeling love for anyone, because he has given his whole heart, at one fell swoop, to one single human being? His soul is a watery waste. In vain does charity send forth her dove, for no olive branch is returned to give signs of anything firm or living.

How does it happen that the tender, sensitive woman who occasions all this pain for man is without compassion for him? Woman is the horizon of man,

where heaven and earth meet. Devils and angels unite in her as nowhere else. The greatest and noblest woman contains a tiny spark of hell, and none is so infamous that you could not find in her at least a small corner of paradise. Where you find her greatest virtues, nearby there you will meet her vilest depths. You must hate women if you would not love them, despise them if you would not adore them, master them or you will be their slave. Love is their fishing rod, by which they find their sustenance and happiness. The big fish they kill; they play with the little ones. Nothing is more ridiculous than a man in love. By comparison, even the independence of a gold fish in his crystalline prison is sublime.

To instil love is the incessant desire of women. They even wish that the moon might have a heart that they might fill it. But like true heroes they only crave the fight and spurn the booty. It is not the conquered but the resisting heart which they esteem. The jealous man, therefore, need expect no mercy; he is finished. The indifferent man calls into play all their longings and all their strength. They have no tears for the wounds which they inflict, while they kiss the hand by which they are wounded.

Fellowmen, if you wish to win love, hide your own. The only antidote against jealousy is to give cause for jealousy. Be like the wanderers in sweltering Africa. When they meet ravenous beasts they fall to the ground, stop breathing and arrest the beats of their hearts. The tigers approach, take a lick of the apparently dead and pass on without doing harm. You men who are in love, keep back your heartbeats, and women will love you instead of tearing you to pieces.



**COUNTRY COUSIN**—Well, I was in the Metropolitan Museum this morning.  
**CITY HOST**—That's nothing to brag about. I know two or three fellows living right here in New York who have been there.

# BLUEBEARD—FOR GROWN-UPS

By Anne Warner

THERE was once upon a time a theatrical manager whose chin after shaving looked so blue that he was commonly called "Bluebeard." He was a handsome and prosperous gentleman, and much in demand in many directions. Pretty young women with aspirations as high as the stars were especially thick about his knees, and he was extremely kind to them, frequently shutting the door to his office and passing brief, pleasant hours hearing their stories and telling them others which they were sometimes silly enough to swallow whole without noticing where the commas came to a full stop.

A good many of the girls married him and stood for a brief season in the middle of the stage. But then they went off on that road that knows nothing but turnings and presently were lost to view. Nobody ever asked what happened to them, for it is not etiquette in things dramatic ever to speak of anyone unless he or she has an engagement in town.

One day Bluebeard was sitting in his private room discussing with the man whose business it was to look after the theater's wardrobe how to dress the house that night. The man sat on the table and Bluebeard sat in his revolving chair, and they had just about settled on a satisfactory figure when a small office boy came bursting in and exclaimed that there was a girl downstairs who said that she must see Mr. Bluebeard right off.

"Is she pretty?" asked the benevolent manager.

"Oh, ain't she, though!" said the boy.

"Show her up," said the good man, pushing his hair this way and that and

shaking out his handkerchief till the scent of violets streamed about in subtle clouds.

"Well, I'll see about the rest of this at once," said the man who had been sitting on the table.

"Yes," said Bluebeard. "Yes—and remember I want the house nicely dressed as usual."

The man nodded, and then he went out by another door just as Miss Susy Cue came in by the regular one.

Bluebeard sized her up at a glance and fell in love with her at once. Susy Cue was just about as quick as he was.

"You're Mr. Bluebeard," said she. "I'm Susy Cue. Does this door lock?"

"Yes," said Bluebeard, a bit startled. "Yes, it does."

"Then I'll lock it," said Susy Cue, and locked the door immediately.

"There's another door perhaps?" said Miss Cue then.

"Y—yes," said Bluebeard; "it's behind the screen there back of the card index."

Miss Cue slipped around the card index as if she'd been doing nothing else since her birth and locked the other door.

"Any man about washing transoms this morning?" she asked, turning then.

"N—no," said Bluebeard, a bit uneasy. "I say, are you in the profession?"

"Not yet," said Miss Cue, "but I'm standing back for a running jump, and I'll be in it with both feet when I land."

She took off her hat as she said that and fluffed up her hair a bit. She was an *awfully* pretty girl.

"Are you married?" queried Bluebeard.

"Not yet, but I shall be soon."

Bluebeard's face fell. "Oh!" he said simply, but with a world of meaning in the syllable.

Miss Cue laughed. "It's you I'm going to marry," she said. "Take me on your lap now and I'll tell you all about it."

He took her on his lap and she told him all about it, and the result of it was that they were married a week later, although both begrudged the time that the ceremony took.

The Saturday after the wedding Bluebeard took his pretty wife for a long motor ride into the country. They stopped at a quaint foreign-looking place surrounded by a wall. They had a good lunch there, and then they climbed a tower to see the view. From the tower they could see a good deal besides the view; right beneath them was a garden where several ladies in gray were working things for the Actors' Bazaar.

"Is that a school?" asked Susy Bluebeard.

"No," said her husband; "those are my other wives."

This made Susy Bluebeard sit up and take notice. "Are they all divorced?" she asked curiously.

"I never bother with divorces," said Bluebeard. "I just take them motor-ing and pop them in here."

"Have you brought me up to pop me in here, too?" asked his very much amused better and smarter half.

"What—with the paper all printed for your opening night!" smiled her husband. "Not much. I have merely brought you here as a warning of your fate if you dare to disobey me."

Susy Bluebeard laughed and laughed. "What did they all do?" she begged to know. "Take me on your lap and tell me all about it."

Bluebeard, who had been married only three days and still enjoyed holding her, acceded at once to her request. "They brought no money into the house," he explained kindly.

"I don't understand," said Susy Bluebeard, laying her head upon his shoulder. "Didn't they play their parts well?"

"Oh, yes, they played their parts

well, but they would not do anything more than play their parts. Now a big thing to consider in theatrical popularity is what comes after the theater. They wouldn't go to suppers, frisk about a bit or anything of that sort. I was quite willing and yet they wouldn't. Not a man ever took a box for love of a wife of mine. It didn't do, you know. So I was obliged to get rid of them one after the other. It was very tiresome."

"Poor dear!" said Susy, rubbing her face against his face. "I won't be like that; I'll bring money into the house."

"You mustn't go too far, you know," said Bluebeard. "I don't mean that, either."

"No, no," laughed Mrs. Bluebeard; "I quite understand."

A week later she made her debut in a startling occult drama, interpreting the part of a housemaid who suddenly discovers that the butler is Rameses reincarnated. It was a brilliant chance, and Bluebeard's wife, again become Susy Cue on the billboards, made the most of it. She made the most of her eyes, too, and as to her legs—well! With them she did wonders. "Wonders" is the word.

Bluebeard, rushing in after the final curtain, was in ecstasies, and kissed her in his character of manager. Nobody knew yet that he was her husband.

"I suppose I'm not expected to see anyone but you this first night," said Miss Cue, kicking off her slippers and handing her hair to the maid. "I don't know a blessed man yet to get any money out of, you know."

"Oh, I wouldn't expect it right off," said Bluebeard in his most benevolent manner.

He took her to supper himself that night.

The next afternoon he went home for a motor trip and found her gone. As a result the entire front row was taken that night, and the new star was pelted with roses. Bluebeard smiled.

"It's awfully easy," she said to him when he came to her between acts. "I don't see why any girl ever gave you a chance to complain of her. It's much

more fun to bring money into the house than not to."

A few days passed thus, and then one evening at the end of the third act when he went to take her home she wasn't there. "It's Saturday night," she left pinned to the cushion, "and I'll be back with a diamond necklace and eight boxes full of men for Monday's performance. Don't worry."

Of course he had never meant anything like this, and it annoyed him terribly; he didn't know when anything—any little thing—had annoyed him so much.

She returned Monday with a diamond necklace, a river of pearls and not only the eight boxes of men but three even rows of old gentlemen besides. It was plain to be seen that here was a veritable starry gold mine, and yet the manager frowned—men are just so queer.

"You'll never see me another week end," she said gaily. "I'd no idea it was such sport."

Bluebeard was very angry at that, and going into the box office, wrote out her two weeks' notice at once. "Go post that on Miss Cue's door," he said to the nearest attendant, using his haughtiest tone.

The attendant obeyed, and Miss Cue learned of it at once. A posted two weeks' notice is about the quickest thing to spread that has so far been invented.

She sent for her husband and he came.

"Well, I declare!" she said to him then. "If men aren't inconsistent! It seems that you didn't really want the money so badly as you made out, after all. Only tell me one thing: am I to be a lady in gray henceforth?"

"You are, madame," he said sternly.

"One last request: may I have my sister with me?"

"Who is your sister?"

"She's my maid."

"Yes, you can take her, too."

"Thanks," said his wife briefly. "Pack up our things, Anne. We'll start tonight."

Bluebeard jumped. He hadn't quite counted on that. "But your contract—" he stuttered.

"Stars and wives don't have to keep

contracts," said Mrs. Bluebeard. "Go and hunt for my understudy. She'll jump at the chance. Good-bye. Here, Anne, put this hare's foot into that shoe; and, whatever you forget, hang on to the rouge, for I shall need a bit of color to brighten the gray days coming."

Bluebeard stalked off angrily.

The minute the door to the hall was closed the curtain that hung over the first act costume parted, and the man that had been behind it came forward. "I'll rescue you just as soon as I can fix up my aeroplane," he promised.

"Yes," said Bluebeard's wife, who was lacing one boot and knitting her brows at the same time, "do. That'll be sweet of you. And fetch along the other boys, too; if there aren't wives enough to go round, why, the poor things'll only enjoy themselves the more. What a brute he is, anyway!"

"He's had that reputation for ages, you know," began the man, but then he paused.

"Are you ready?" roared Bluebeard outside the door. "I've cranked the machine."

"I'm coming," Mrs. Bluebeard screamed back. "Here, Anne, throw me my dog and follow as quick as you can."

Soon, very soon, they were out upon the clear moonlit road, with Anne behind in the rumble, and in less than an hour Bluebeard had disposed of another wife.

He really felt quite pleased with himself.

But alas, how little any of us can foresee what is next to come! As the dreadfully much married man whirled along on his way back toward town he was suddenly seized and lifted aloft, and his motor raced off alone and curvetted into the ditch.

Great claws gripped him. For a second he thought that he was dreaming, and that what he felt digging into his ribs was a fancied trust going for his pockets. But no, the pain was too real. What did it mean? Where would it end?

The ladies in gray gathered around the latest addition to their party in



one merry throng of curiosity. "Was Ethel's baby a girl?" "Was Nat's book a go?" they all begged to know at once. Susy, having planted Sister Anne on the tower to watch for their deliverers, handed chocolates all round and answered every question. "Silly geese," she said to them kindly, when they had learned all that they wished to know as to others and were ready at last to hear her own story, "you see, the whole trouble was that we and he were alike unable to tell causes for symptoms. It wasn't that he wanted wives who did this or wives who did that; it was just that he wanted wives with an 's.'"

"And it was just that we didn't want husbands with an 's'?" said the brightest of the gray sisterhood.

"Exactly so. Sister Anne, do you see anything?"

"Nothing," answered Anne.

"But now we will have just one husband apiece all round," said the quietest of the grass widows. "How nice that will be! I shall be awfully good to mine."

"Of course you will," said Susy Bluebeard kindly. "And I tell you what, girls, those front row men make the very

best kind of husbands. They're so tired of being bandied about between choruses and living on lobster Newburg that they think hash and cradles are just the finest things going. Sister Anne, do you see anything?"

"Nothing," answered Anne.

"I think perhaps we did wrong to scorn them so," said the most thoughtful of the young women, "but we were trying to uplift the stage."

"Yes, I know," said Susy. "Your intentions were good, but the stage doesn't need uplifting just now. What the stage needs right now is setting down good and hard."

"Oh, what's that?" they all cried together, hearing a dreadful whirr and looking upward.

"Sister Anne, do you see anything?" cried Sister Susy.

"Yes, I see something," cried Anne.

The dawn was just breaking, and over their heads floated majestically a great aeroplane.

"I've got Bluebeard here, trussed up like a fowl," cried a voice from the clouds. "What shall I do with him?"

"Drop him!" they all cried together.



## ENCHANTED

By Richard Le Gallienne

ARE the days just the same without my face?  
The nights as wonderful that speak no word—  
And is the world the same enchanted place  
As when I said, "I love you," and you heard?

And when you said—ah, but the moon that night,  
And all the firmament from north to south!  
Did God Himself see e'er a world so bright,  
Beginning—ah, and ending—at your mouth?



A PESSIMIST is an optimist who has forgotten to wear his mask.

# A DAUGHTER OF THE STARS

By Martha McCulloch-Williams

**"L**OOKS the winner all over. So sure a winner, I hate to back her against the field—bar none," Elwood said, his face lighting up vividly as he saw Melisande stripped. She was worth seeing—clean, rangy, fine of line, with a beautiful lean head—the muzzle could go in a quart pot—a perfect neck, melting into sharp withers, which in turn ran on to a flawless back, and were matched by rump and quarters beyond criticism. Her coat, a chestnut so dark it was black in shadow, showed under the June sunshine, a varicolored dazzle of jewel tints. Not for naught was she Persimmon's granddaughter, many times inbred to the prepotent St. Simon strain. Five years old, unblemished, unbeaten, her owner, Gillis Narn, had set her one last supreme task—to win for him the Hunt Cup, proudest of gentlemen's trophies, the prize of a point-to-point event, the chief fixture at Shotover.

The Shotover Hunt Club embraced the very crown and capsheaf of riches and fashion. Its members, men and women, were for the most part so surfeited with speeding and motors that they came to the midyear meet with a sense of refreshment—as who should say: "Back to the simple life." Notwithstanding, there was the greatest rivalry in everything, in horses especially, and most notably in entries for the cup. It was to be a distance race—something beyond four miles over country, open but roughish. There was a long hill to negotiate, not very steep, to be sure, to say nothing of a brook which, curving through the grassed land, provided two water jumps, hedges, combinations of hedge and ditch, banked

walls with ditches on one side or the other, and at the very last, a stake-and bound rasper backed by brushwood, tall enough, stout enough, thick enough to take the last desperate inch of breath and stay and gameness in whatever got over it.

There were gentlemen riders, preferably owners. Even the friend of a friend of a professional was barred. Entrance was open—at least theoretically, but club membership indubitably went a long way. Not necessarily membership in the Shotover. The comity of good riding and good riders reached even the most unfashionable of clubs. Distinctly lucky that for Billy Doswell. His club, the Greenlaw, would never have been known outside its native Virginia pine country, except for the fact that certain members of it, under Billy's lead, had got in the way of breeding and training hunters that came later to be reckoned creatures of degree—and price—among richer men.

Melisande was not one of them—Billy sighed when he had to admit it. None the less a great mare—so great Billy envied her owner. Gillis Narn cared no more for his horses than for anything else—they had but one end in existence, to fear him, achieve for him and thus reflect more effulgently the glory of his riches. Billy simply oozed friendliness and good fellowship, but in spite of it came near to hating Narn. The hatred manifested itself in a most grave, even knightly courtesy, which aggravated Narn beyond measure—it threw into such relief his own brusque, almost rude manner to Doswell. It made him deadly angry that Billy had dared enter Sweetbrier for the cup—

he had even tried to protest the nomination upon the ground of the latter's blood. As to grandsires Sweetbrier had a cloud of glory—paternally she came down through Longfellow, Lexington, Boston, Sir Archy, all the immortal line, straight from Diomedes, first Derby victor, and was fortified by the richest out-crosses, even though her sire had been undistinguished; her dam was an Arab, brought to the south country by one of England's Lost Legion, who, tarrying there a while, had sought to strike root and redeem himself. He had failed of course, and drifting on, had left the mare at Thornbush, the Doswell plantation, as the sole return he could make those who had sheltered him in extremity. She had lived to a great age. Sweetbrier, her latest foal, was her replica, curiously perfect.

Time was sharpening the likeness. Billy himself would have been put to it to tell mother from daughter, had the mother been living. The mother was of the true Nedjed breed, descended from the famous "mares of Mahomet." The Lost Legionaire had somehow been careful to leave proof of the fact. Thus Narn's protest had come to naught, recoiling indeed upon his own head, in good-natured banter and thereby accenting his misliking for Doswell.

Sweetbrier also was out and stripped. On looks she had no show whatever against Melisande. Yet old Major Bayne, Nestor of the turf, accounted the best judge of conformation, blood lines and potentialities, eyed her approvingly, even walking up to her and running his hand almost lovingly down the beautiful slant of her throat. Elwood smiled at the action, his awe of the Major notwithstanding. Turning again to face Melisande, he said with a suppressed laugh: "Gillis, you'll get us disliked—every man of us. It's ungentelemanly to bet on a certainty—but Melisande for my money—Melisande against the field."

"Bar one," the Major said meaningly, nodding faintly toward Sweetbrier. Doswell, at the mare's head, took off his hat, saying gravely though his eyes twinkled: "Major, I'm really glad to find one man

of horse sense in this outfit." Narn grew very red, swelling like a turkey cock, and standing tiptoe between steps as he pranced about. "You of course, know everything, Major," he said ironically. "Won't you kindly tell us how you formed this latest judgment?"

"Through knowing something of men—and something more of horses," the Major answered evenly. "I wonder if you will understand when I tell you Sweetbrier is a daughter of the stars?"

"I never went in for astrology and that sort of thing. The education of a gentleman has been quite sufficient for me," Narn answered, swelling more and more. The Major chuckled. "A man who owns good horses, rides them and thinks he loves them, should certainly know them," he said. "And you never do really know them until you hear and believe the legend back of the name."

"Do you know it?" Narn demanded roughly of Doswell. Billy nodded. "You see, the Englishman made a sort of—well, friend, of me. I was seven, he—almost any age. But he talked to me as though we were equals."

"And you passed on his vaporings to the Major? I want better authority," Narn returned.

The Major interposed, a hint of sternness in his voice.

"You can have it—in volumes. This is the story—I've read it in Arabic and French as well as English; everywhere it is the same.

"The Arabs, as you may know, ride mares only. No wonder Mahomet's men, thus mounted, swept the world as a scourge. Once, when luck was against them, they fought a running fight for three days and nights, men and horses alike without food or water. The mares were trained to move by the sound of the trumpet, but when presently they came to grass and water, with no enemy in sight, the famished creatures broke for it, not pell mell, but in regular ranks. There were still seven thousand of them—in the beginning there had been fifty. But as they came to the edge of the stream, before a nose had been thrust into it, Mahomet made the trumpets sound recall. It was the

supreme test—would training, love of their masters, prevail against the cravings of the flesh? Seven mares only, one in each thousand, turned back and ranged themselves as in face of a foe. The others drank cravenly—so deeply that many of them died. But from the seven supreme heroines the Nedjed breed has come. Arabs call such descendants the 'daughters of the stars.' Your comrade," turning to Billy, "no doubt gave you the same account."

"Pretty much," Billy said, his eyes reflective. "But it would have done your heart good the way he cursed Mahomet. He said hell was too good for any man that ever owned a real horse and could let himself be so cruel."

"He was right—partly—only partly," the Major answered, nodding. "The seven got water soon—and won immortality by waiting. As long as there are good men and women to love good horses that story will be an inspiration."

With that he walked away. Narn, striding after him, said with a carefully casual accent: "Lay you a pony, Major—at any odds you care for—that Melisande beats Sweetbrier fifty yards in the mile. What d'ye say?"

"In the first mile perhaps—but I doubt even that," the Major answered, ignoring the suggested wager. "Your mare is superb, Narn—indeed, just a little too good for this sort of thing. On a regular track, weight for age, nothing to hinder, she would possibly beat the other. But cross country—that is another story. Sweetbrier can go and stay—stay till she is all in; then up comes something—maybe the ghost of those old war heroines—that goes on and on, and knows nothing but victory."

"You are too subtle for me," Narn said, pretending to yawn but impressed in spite of himself. "Think over my offer," he went on. "It holds good till—the end of the race. Just lift a finger to Sanders—he is to be my commissioner, you know—if you make up your mind when we're coming to the last jump."

"Thanks. You are—liberal," the Major said with a bow. As Narn left him he whistled softly, saying to himself

under his breath: "Mr. Gillis Narn has got the scare of his life thrown into him. Maybe I ought not to have thrown it—it's hardly fair to Doswell. What can be under the cards? It is plain Gillis wants the cup badly, and is betting to keep his courage up."

The Major held his ears no less than his lips from gossip—otherwise he would have known. The meet ran from Thursday to Saturday—this was Friday. Since the opening there had been a buzz, under breath and discreetly masked to be sure, but none the less a buzz. It had to do with Narn and the Bird of Paradise, otherwise Felicie Raymonde, as to whom the astutest were at sea whether to class her maid, wife or widow. Indubitably she had money—so much money she did not care for it. As indubitably she had charm, a manner of assured position and family connections quite equal to a halo. Witness—she had a real marquis, not out at elbows, for her stepfather; her sole sister had married an Italian prince and her cousin was third wife to almost the richest man in New York.

This was all of record. The only obscurity was regarding Felicie herself. Malice said her father's name had been Stubbs, not Raymonde, also that his millions had been acquired in devious ways. Since he had died decently in the very farthest West while his daughters still wore pigtails, the transition which had given them their transatlantic aura had been as easy as it was inevitable. Felicie had not escaped adventures. More than once there had been vague circumstantial reports of her marriage. She did not even dignify them by contradiction further than by her card, which read: "Miss Raymonde. America."

Since she stayed with the Austricks it was more than sufficient. Young Mrs. Austrick was queen regent of Shotover's countryside. The second generation of great riches, the Austricks were so trebly gilt that they chose occasionally to be quite human. Thus, liking Billy Doswell also, but for quite unlike reasons, they made both free of their big house. Billy could have stayed there throughout the whole holiday he was

giving himself, after getting through the matter of selling his string of hunters, but chose instead to have his own lodging, a small, quaint, clean chamber in a farmhouse conveniently at hand. Regina Austrick had rated such wilfulness, yet deep down had felt that Billy was right. She had come as near chuckling as a person so preëminently high-bred could over Billy's attitude toward the greater part of his whilom customers. He could never be less than the pink and pattern of courtesy, yet underneath it there was a certain fine subtle consideration for folk who had the misfortune to be merely rich instead of well born.

Felicie found Billy so charming she straightway set about turning his head. And for the first time in her life she failed—utterly, miserably, balked not by indifference but a certain chivalric comrade kindness. Furious over her failure, she threw herself openly at Narn's head. She was so beautiful, so original, so subtly alluring that very shortly he was enough in love to propose outright—rather condescendingly, to be sure. Felicie set things even by refusing him flatly. By thus withstanding him she made herself the object of his supreme desire. He had a firm belief that life owed him whatever he really wanted. He proposed over and over and over—so many times Felicie lost count of them. He wearied her inexpressibly, yet she let herself contemplate the prospect of marrying him. Regina said he was worth while—that his wife would have more than the luxury of queens. Felicie cared nothing for money save as it expressed itself in terms of luxury, but she could not well live without it.

Unless—she stopped there always, frowning angrily over the thought of Billy. Imbecile! Idiot! And was not she herself more an idiot? She hated him—honestly hated him—at least half the time. The other half? It boots not to emphasize her state further than to say there were nights when she lay wide-eyed until dawn was gray in the east, wondering why she, whom all other men found so fair, so desirable, was no

more than a rose in blow to this one man.

It was after such a night, and the short, weary sleep that preceded rising, she had made her bargain with Narn. A tentative one, withal reckless.

"I'm sick of the question—let the cup decide. If you win it—yes; if you lose it—no," she had said to him, adding with a grimace: "You are to tell nobody outright—except of course Regina and Allan. But I don't care how many people you let guess—you can say they guessed wrong."

Narn had almost forced his chums to guess the state of affairs. By this Friday half of Shotover sensed the situation. Marvelous to relate, Billy Doswell had no inkling of it. Which was lucky for him—since it was near his heart to win the cup—for the glory of the Greenlaw, the fame of Sweetbrier and the happiness of a certain pair of blue eyes which illumined the dearest rosy face in all Virginia. Possibly, indeed, the face explained the crafty innocence which had foiled Felicie. Billy liked Felicie—she was out of the common and had a lot to her. It was a pity that she should marry Narn—but as well Narn as another of his sort; only his sort could afford such a wife—thus Billy in his self-communings. She was too good for Narn—indeed, she might have been the finest sort of woman if she had half a decent chance—but rich folks could afford to keep apart if they didn't suit—besides, there was the divorce court.

Hence Billy would not have laid a straw in Narn's way, much less anything so potential as a cup, if he had known what he was doing. Sweetbrier had been made free of Austrick's stable—as a Shotover governor, he had about the best on the track. Billy, leading his pet carefully up and down the paddock, noting with joy how sure and easy was her every motion, was rather amazed to have Narn tap him on the shoulder, saying off-handedly: "Name your price, Doswell. You know I'm going in for breeding next season. I should really like to have the mare—now I know her blood."

"I hate to be disobliging," Billy said,

facing about, "but you see, Mr. Narn, there are things you can't sell. At least, if you happen to be foolish—as I am some ways. We've parted with all the stock except Sweetbrier; and she—why, she's like one of the family. I believe, though, I can get you a filly from one of her sisters—inbred at that—so the blood will be there."

"Thanks. I want this particular mare," Narn answered irritably. Billy glanced at him shrewdly, then dropped his eyes and said with a far-away accent: "I couldn't sell her—not for a million—until after Saturday. You see how that is—she's due to start, and money's up on her. You couldn't have any notion of—keeping her out of things?"

Narn reddened visibly. "If I paid a fancy price you couldn't expect me to risk letting the mare kill or hurt herself," he said to save his face—Billy he was sure, had seen through his offer. But Billy was guilelessness itself as he said, with the least shrug: "No, I couldn't. So that settles it. We've got to start sure as we are alive Saturday. And maybe at the finish you and your pretty gal will be there ahead of us—but, certain as you are, you'll know you've been to the races!"

Narn stalked off swearing inwardly. Billy put both arms about Sweetbrier's neck, whispering in her ear. "That fine cup will make a nice wedding present for somebody—somebody we know and love. Remember that, baby, when the pinch comes. I know you will win for me, and it's the home pasture for you all the rest of the time."

Sweetbrier nipped him delicately with a soft, half-plaintive whimper. It roused him to the fact that he had not given her her sugar. Only half a lump this time—all he dared, with the race so close. "You ain't pretty, except for your dapple bay coat," he said impartially, "but, Lord, that doesn't matter! You're all there, hipcord and whalebone and the grit of a gun flint! What do I care that you're a full hand lower than Miss Melisande? She can outreach you—that I know for certain—but you can outgame and outgo her, and we'll do it or die trying."

Sweetbrier was raggedly ugly, but there was power in every line. Odd-looking, too—with a pure flaxen mane and tail, a muzzle smutched with white as though prenataally she had drunk of cream, and four short white stockings, to set off her red satin skin. But her eyes held a hint of the sun-parched East—luculent, alert, with fire in their depths. Billy fancied reproach in them as she champed delicately the scantled sweet. "Next week you shall have apples—sweet red apples," he murmured. "And somebody will give you candy—as much as that cup will hold—after we get home."

Billy was tall, but so spare he weighed within a pound of Narn, who was below the middle height, well made and well-muscled, and as good a horseman as knowledge and practice without love can make. Billy did not underrate him any more than he underrated Melisande. When the bugle blew for the cup race, fetching out the four starters, colors up, Doswell knew he had the ride of a lifetime ahead of him. To himself he did not call it a race. It was rather a duel—only Melisande could give Sweetbrier any sort of argument. Polly Flinders, the showy sorrel, was sure to blow up halfway round the course, while as for black Sorrento, he would balk at the first water jump, notwithstanding in his racing days he had won a classic. The black fellow had to pack five pounds overweight—young Cubberly, his rider, looked his name. Polly Flinders had Joe Manners up; he tipped the scale three pounds under Doswell and Narn. Lead had been waived—it was out of place with owners riding. Besides, said the mass, there was really no need of it—the difference was so slight. Billy of course knew better—he had heard from his childhood the saying: "The weight of a stable key may win or lose a race." But the knowledge gave him no concern, since the real contenders carried the same impost.

The race broke from a standing start, a furlong up wind from the stand. All the way to the stand, and a little beyond it, there was a spread of fairish turf—



not too much since the Shotover prided itself on running this hunting event under real hunt conditions. The course ran in and out of bounds, serpentine in easy curves. For the most part it was in plain view—only the willows along the brook hid the approach to the second water jump. The hill lay beyond the first water jump—thus in climbing it the horses were in eye range. Descent was by three successive ramps, which looked ridiculously easy to get over yet were in truth dangerous and difficult.

There was a crowd so big it almost swamped the club members and their guests, yet the infield was kept clear. Motors, rank on rank, parked either hand of the stand, gave coigns of vantage to many, as also did half a dozen tallyhos, whose tops were crowded with glowing faces and fine frocks. Felicie was queen of them—all in glowing red, the color of Sweetbrier's coat, her dark beautiful face as vivid as her gown. As the race swept down upon them, she and Regina stood upright, twirling fluffy parasols high above their heads. Narn did not see them—his eyes were glued to the course—but Billy recklessly flung them a kiss.

Sweetbrier ran free as water—so freely, indeed, that he took her up a bit as they neared the first jump. Melisande went over like a bird, landing so beautifully she hardly checked in her stride. Polly Flinders tipped a heel but got over safe. Sorrento batted his ears and launched himself disdainfully, as though ashamed to jump in such company. The jump was not a stiff one—merely post-and-rail topping a low bank, yet Sweetbrier took off as carefully as if it were a fearsome thing. Thereat Elwood laughed joyously, slapped the Major on the back and said in glee: "Must be the 'daughter of the stars' isn't feeling right today. See, Melisande is five yards to the good already!"

"With Polly at her counter. I think that tells the story," the Major answered, shrugging the least bit.

Elwood looked abashed. "Polly doesn't count," he said. "She is, I

admit, only part of the picture. But Doswell should know better than to trail this way. I dare say he counts on coming strong at the last."

"You should have advised him beforehand," the Major said, smiling faintly. "I should not have ventured that—to the best horseman I ever saw."

The race was crossing a bit of ploughed land—rye stubble turned the week before. A smother of young green growth peered up between the furrows. Melisande slacked—she had never skimmed such soft tangled going. Sweetbrier was at home in it—many times she had raced over its counterpart hunting in the Greenlaw country. Billy had no need to rein her slantwise the furrows—she slanted them of her own knowledge, got thus firmer footing, and came to the boundary hedge not only first but better breathed than the rest.

The next two fields were stony pasture, cut midway by a crumbling wide stone wall. Sorrento sulked at the rough going, flinging up his head and switching his tail. "He's done for already," the Major murmured, noting it through his glass. Elwood, hanging at his elbow, shook his head faintly, murmured under his breath: "The old one is a bird—too fly for me," and ambled toward the Austrick coach. Thus he missed seeing the black horse refuse the stone barrier and Polly Flinders stumble in her take off, fall and roll, luckily without damage to her rider, who sagely declined to remount. Melisande took the wall with her splendid skimming soar, half a breath ahead of Sweetbrier, who had picked her way over the stony ground and come to the wall where it was the least bit gapped but cumbered with thorny tangle.

Her leap was thrilling—a long lance flight, barely as high as the stones, but reaching beyond the tangle. Felicie caught her breath, silent but her heart saying: "For Billy! She would never do it for any other man." Next minute she grew very white. The two riders were out of club bounds—together, it seemed, they crashed through an over-



grown hedge and raced across a meadow newly mown to the first water jump. The brook had been dammed and spread out a broad, smooth, silver pool, with grassed banks edged within by spiky arrowheads. The pool was not deep enough for danger, but broad enough to be trying—even Narn knew Melisande could not sweep it unless she were full-breathed. Therefore he checked, as Billy did; therefore also the two mares went over it abreast, but now Melisande's greater reach told—she gained a foot, a yard, a length, two lengths, by the time they came to the first hillside leap.

It was over a sagging paling, wire-bound, low and untidy. Melisande took it flying—to find her heels trapped in a deep, narrow ditch beyond. Sweetbrier, going over deliberately, cleared everything and ran on—for the first time in the lead. In reward her partisans cheered, strongly, clearly. Billy hardly heard them. He was amazed at himself—at the lust of victory burning within him. Narn himself was not more madly set on winning. Fierce joy possessed him as he noted Melisande foam-streaked from counter to tail, while there were but a few moist streaks in the red satin flanks beneath him. And they were halfway home—a stake set in the plateau on top of the slope told so much. They had circled it widely. Down the ramps the course ran straightaway, but beyond them it bent back on itself to escape a bit of bogland, then, reëntering bounds, ran along the brook bank for a hundred yards to reach the last water jump.

As in a dream Billy rode the ramps, conscious as he made the last that Melisande was falling back. He did not turn his head—the ethics of victory forbade. Leaning in his saddle, he said softly to his mount: "Baby, I'm afraid this finish won't be even—interesting."

Notwithstanding he rode his best—the U curve was done with—he was coming to the masking willows. He heard a husky cry. Narn, spurring fiercely at him, called: "Pull up, or I'll

ride you down! God, fellow, I *must* win! Felicie—"

"Don't you name her—you hound!" Billy called back, half turning in his saddle. Narn reached for him—missed. Billy swung his whip and lashed the other full in the face. The next second, Narn had crowded Melisande upon him, knocked Sweetbrier recklessly to her knees, slashed her viciously and swept on.

A wild, almost frightened shout broke from the crowd as it saw him take the second water jump alone. He was thirty yards away from it when Sweetbrier came in sight. She seemed to move uncertainly—not as though hurt, but wild with rage—which was exactly her state. Narn had given her the first stroke of a whip. It had set her on fire; for half a breath she had stood still, shaking, her nostrils blaring, her eyes gleaming below batted ears. Billy had let her be. Then his hand had crept to her mane. In a voice he hardly knew for his own he said in her ear: "It was a dog's trick. Shall we let him profit by it? Won't you run your damndest to save a woman?"

As though answering, she had taken the course, not deliberately, mincingly, but like a winged fury. Billy checked her the least bit before they came to the brook—she was over it and stretching after Melisande almost before he knew it. But the redoubled cheering, the crying of Sweetbrier's name, told Narn he had still to win his race and his prize. He rode like a careful demon—Billy himself could have done no better. No more flauntings of speed, no more wastings of breath. At every leap he spared Melisande yet all the while urged her madly. In every field he gave her what easing the ground permitted. Thus for a mile he held his heartbreaking advantage, riding alone and never looking back.

He knew his man. With any other he would have doomed himself. Billy would never speak—since to speak truth he must name a woman. Narn by turns blessed the chivalry he had sneered at, by turns cursed Billy as his evil genius. Yet even in this crisis he

thought of making up to him. Money could do it—Billy's silence should be made truly golden. He could hear now his own name cried aloud—his following, wildly triumphant, were standing, beckoning him on. But they did not have it all their own way—there was shriller, keener crying: "Doswell! Doswell! Oh, you Sweetbrier! Come! Come!"

Spur and spare as he might, Melisande began to slacken. Narn lashed her savagely—she sprang away like an arrow from a bow. On, on, still on she flew, though once she faltered. He lashed her again—and in that instant caught the sound of nearing hoofs. His mare did her best—but it did not suffice to hold the remnant of advantage. A lean head, no longer red, but black with sweat, was thrust even—it stayed there, neither gaining nor losing, all through next to the last field, a spread of fairish turf. Leaping the low hedge bounding it was but play—Melisande, over first, again led by half a length. Billy's heart died within him. Desperately he gathered up the

reins, calling low to his mare: "Baby—do your best! I can't ask for more."

Sweetbrier was reeking, trembling, bleary-eyed, her heart pounding, her gait a little rolling. But at the cry of love in need some help came—some far-off strength awoke. In a wink she had steadied, quickened, locked Melisande, passed her—all alone she took the gruelling last leap, landed staggering, but found her feet and ran on to the finish—still alone.

Melisande had not refused it. Game and gallant as she was goodly, she had at her rider's slashing tried the impossible. Blown, nerveless, seeing all things dimly through bloodshot eyes, she had leaped, had fallen, and lay gasping her last, as the crowd, from millionaire to stableboy, rose to greet her victorious rival.

Women do odd things. Felicie sent Billy's bride a spray of sweetbrier in enamel with diamond dewdrops. To Regina she explained: "It is the price of my salvation." And young Mrs. Austrick knew she was speaking truth.



## AFTER PARTING

By Arthur Stringer

'TWAS not that, losing you, all life grew lonely,  
Nor, having said farewell,  
I faced an empty world where only  
Shadows and silence fell!

Nay, 'twas when at your side I knew no sorrow,  
When Love made us its own,  
And we knew neither yesterday nor morrow,  
That I stood quite alone!

*For now I know them all, the comrade faces  
That pass me, crowned with pain,  
And crowding round me in earth's silent places,  
My Dead Selves speak again!*

# SAN FRANCISCO THE JOYOUS

By Gelett Burgess

SOME five years ago, one August night, in a grove of virgin red-woods under the full moon, a man stood smilingly dodging the jocose abuse and flying soda bottles of some six hundred well known San Franciscans trying hard to howl him down. He was, they held, abusing the fair name of their beloved city.

Was he a grafter, debauching the municipal government—or one of the prosecution, bringing the town into disrepute by advertising its shame? Neither one would have excited such protests, for there were representatives of both classes present. Was he a street railroad magnate, grabbing a franchise which would tie up the rights to the highways for years to come? An official of the "octopus" engaged in throttling the commerce of the State? No, there were too many of that sort in the audience to cause remark. Had he written sacrilegiously of the town—stolen a hill or two, in the good old way—made the place unsightly with uncouth advertisements? No, it was worse than that.

He had had the temerity to call the city "'Frisco," and had defended the use of the name.

There is nothing which so maddens a true San Franciscan as to hear this abbreviated form of the name. "'Frisco" is the mark of the tourist and tenderfoot, the slang of the actor and commercial traveler; but "San Fran-cis-co," to the whole extent of its four syllables, is what the native prides himself on always calling the city by the Golden Gate. More likely was old Francisco de Haro, *alcalde* of the Mission Dolores, to have been called by that familiar *sobriquet* than that it should now be applied to his

native place by any resident, be he messenger boy or capitalist. It is the unwritten law of the Golden Gate.

And yet, why not? Was not the man in the grove right when he asserted that the name "'Frisco" was the best advertisement San Francisco ever had, perhaps the best any city ever had? Nick-names are given only to popular men. They are, in a way, terms of endearment. When you call William "Bill," it is likely to be through fondness. What other city in the world, then, can boast of such favor? The name is the sign that it is known, loved, favored. "'Frisco" should be the best appreciated of the town's many words of praise. Natives should be proud of it, boast of it, emblazon it upon their banner. But, even yet, they are not aware of the great commercial value of the term.

In spite of this opposition, the commercial traveler, the actor, the tourist and the tramp will still continue to speak affectionately of "'Frisco." What has the town done to achieve such a popularity?

For one thing, she has been unconsciously, magnificently herself. Isolated, remote, hidden between the mountains and the sea, she has had to be sufficient to herself, to set her own standards, create her own traditions. The hideous cast iron monument called "Lotta's Fountain," a well beloved, jealously preserved relic of the golden age, at the intersection of Market, Kearny and Geary streets, is the hub of the California universe. It is the center of the life of a city whose fame is world wide—a fame for nothing for which other cities are famous, unless it be Bagdad—fame for romance! Gold,

blood and flowers, adventure, poetry, mystery, all sing in the name "San Francisco."

At the very first sight the town inspires the imagination. When, after crawling through leagues of snow sheds over the mountains of the coast range, through ice and sleet to orange groves—across Suisun Bay, along the shore to Oakland, one embarks upon the ferry which brings one across San Francisco harbor to the magic town, the vision is austere and terrible. A huge land-locked bay, surrounded by gaunt, treeless hills, with mountains in the distance and barren islands in the foreground. One feels the thousands of miles from civilization; one approaches the rugged, precipitous city with expectation awakened, keenly aroused to anticipate a newer, fresher life, unlike anything else in the world. And one is not disappointed.

For, though the stamp of commercial American energy has been set upon it, San Francisco is not yet subdued. It is still corseted and high-heeled, supremely itself, the spoiled child of the nation, wanton, frolicsome, bold. It still wears the vine leaves in its hair.

How hard men have tried to tame this troublesome town! The first stroke of settlement was ironically barbarous. When Jasper O'Farrell, in 1846, set about the laying-out of the city, he had an ideal site for his task—a peninsula, lying like a great thumb on the hand of the mainland, between the Pacific and the sheltered bay, an area romantically configured of hills and valleys, with picturesque land and water views. Mount Tamalpais, just across the Golden Gate, lies to the north, and Mount Diablo, across the harbor, beyond lovely foothills to the east. What chances for terraced streets, "sightly" house lots, magnificent, commanding eminences for the residence section, while the business section might lie comfortably along the level valley below. But no, Jasper O'Farrell, with Puritanical zeal, only extended, crassly, the stupid plan of the original Spanish townsite of Yerba Buena. His rigid mind knew no possible streets save straight ones crossing at mathematical right angles.

Jean Vioget, four years later, followed the same ugly plan, and pushed the original checkerboard into the hills. Market Street, indeed, he permitted to slant, straight as a bullet toward the twin peaks of Las Pappas, but the rest of the city was bound forever to a hard gridiron of rectangular blocks. He allowed no compromise. His streets took their straight and narrow way up hill, down dale, across marsh and valley, without regard to beauty or expense. There they stay, hacked out of the earth and rock, precipitous, inaccessible, grotesque.

So the city, like a severely cut, fashionable but unbecoming gown, covers the shoulders of a wonderful natural landscape, as a hobble skirt might fit itself to the caprices of a brown-eyed gypsy. So San Francisco extends over its dozen hills, its roads mounting, grass-grown, untraveled, to the sky, or diving, cobbled, slippery, to the sea.

But for this condition, however, San Francisco would not have had its unique feature, the cable street railways. They make the city accessible in every part. It is like a gorgeous roller coaster—the car that climbs up grades of thirty degrees, swings screaming round angles of ninety and plunges horribly down terrifying slopes. And on the course San Francisco shows itself so various, so distracting, so splendid, that the ride is a very adventure.

As if to flaunt its rigorous enslavers, what flirtatious intermittent glances of beauty the city so discovers! One sullen, dun and somber house conceals another; flat buildings, with their curious entrances, huddle to the street; bogus fronts, stoops, columns, brackets, open air shops sweep by—but at street crossings, atop hills, through crannies between wooden walls, come unexpected, tantalizing vistas of water or mountain. San Francisco, despite its mantle of ugliness, cannot help revealing itself in vestiges of natural splendor; it cannot curb its wayward fancies of hill and cliff. Up and down the traveler may speed, getting little winks of glory, prophecies of what may some time be when the City Beautiful shall come.

San Francisco, always picturesque in spite of itself, has since the fire somewhat changed its aspect. The downtown third of it, which for ten years boasted only nine new modern office buildings, has suddenly blossomed into a city of skyscrapers. This portion is now more nearly like any typically American city. It has perhaps more striking examples of the best modern architecture, more adventurous essays in the monumental than the Middle West can boast, but the stamp of commercialism is now there. No longer, or more justly perhaps, not yet—for we who loved the old town may hope—are to be found, hidden in the wholesale locality, exotic, flamboyant little oases such as the former Chinatown, an inner village of alleys, gay with Oriental decoration, brushing the skirts of respectability and trade. There are not at present the romantic perils of the "Barbary Coast," the sensational dives and resorts of "Tar Flat"—names to conjure by! The Italian restaurants are no longer hidden under cover, surprises of Bohemia, found and explored only with a familiarity of the place. They bloom under electric lights; they are all "discovered" and written up in fiction, and have no longer any tale to tell. It would take more than Stevenson's talent, now that the refugee cabins of the earthquake year are removed from his beloved old Plaza, to make that little Portsmouth Square romantic, surrounded as it is with lofty office buildings.

West of Van Ness Avenue, a melancholy, abandoned relic of the feverish activity after the fire, a row of residences made over hurriedly into shops and stores from which commerce now has fled, the town is much as of old—only more so, so to speak. The old resident returning would hardly recognize the new colonies west of the city proper, the Richmond district, for instance, built up by the influx of newcomers as the city pushes its way toward the Pacific. But the houses are of the same order—wooden structures mostly of abominable design, over-decorated, ill conceived. A distinguished critic has said of the town that it is built of "imitations which

even if genuine would be inappropriate." In humble houses, not content to be humble, we see evidences of the mushroom growth of the Far West—"rustic" of redwood, painted and sanded to imitate stone, painted marble, machine carvings, topheavy additions to the constructive roofline, stuck-on balconies and fretwork. San Francisco is residentially a wooden city, the few examples of real architecture but making the general run of houses the more distasteful. Formerly each residence had a garden in front or at the side—giving, in that flower producing climate, some relief from "art" of sorts. In the fire-swept zone, however, architects have hewn to the street line and the concrete walk. More insistent are the peculiar "flat houses," each with its three front doors and separate stairs, each with its front abutting on the cable cars while its kitchen windows and back porch overlook the most superb view in the world.

So much for the outward and visible aspect of the place. Socially it is unique, as well. Despite its large element of picturesqueness, it has never become quite self-conscious. It still strives to become like other cities, yet never quite succeeds. Still it wears away its corners to make itself smooth and uniform, not yet realizing its own value, its own charm. It has fought against every distinctive feature, from Chinatown to the Cliff House. But its innate vigor of character has preserved it and will preserve it long. For San Francisco has elements in its blood which defy its naturalization as a "typical" American city. It has reasons for being "different."

Founded by adventurers who in '49 overran the sleepy little Spanish settlement, San Francisco has been a fighting town ever since its birth. The rough and ready impetuosity of the early gold seekers aroused before long the vigilance committees which made of the city a battleground. Dennis Kearney incited the sand lot riots in his persecution of the Chinese; Japanese immigration and competition nearly set the whole country aflame with war; the city and the State bore the brunt of the first really great

labor struggle in the world. Lastly, the graft prosecutions kindled an internecine strife which is not yet abated; it has arrayed brother against brother in an enmity which is now the curse of the city. Besides these surprising, sensational epochs of adventure may be added the great, overwhelming catastrophe which, more than anything else, has given San Francisco its personality and made its name immortal. San Francisco's history has been lurid; every decade has had its melodrama. What wonder that San Francisco is not as other cities!

That spirit of adventure still lives and animates the citizen in dozens of minor ways. The gambling instinct, inherited from the days of gold, still works. On every corner, at the open air cigar stands, still rattles the nickel-in-the-slot gambling machines, as men pay dollars for dime cigars, in the hope of getting a box of perfectos for a nickel. The race track fosters this tendency. San Francisco is still a get-rich-quick town. Fortunes have been made and lost theatrically. Your hostess may be the daughter of a woman who cooked for thirty men on the Comstock; your porter may be a one-time millionaire.

All this atmosphere of luck and chance goes naturally with a fine lavish open-handedness—or did, before the fire gave men a sober pause and a thought for the future—and it has its virtues as well as vices for its symptoms. "Hail-fellow-well-met" will lend you a double eagle, will invite you to his home, put you up at his club. "Take-a-chance" will trust you, fight for you—even though he forgets you on the morrow. "Go-easy" assists "Go-hard"—a quarter into the hat of a blind beggar, and a dollar, a silver dollar, if he confesses to wanting a drink. "Up-all-night" meets "Go-to-church" on a Sunday morning with a nod of fellowship. San Francisco's motto is "Do as you like."

But San Francisco's origin does not wholly account for its character and idiosyncrasies. It is the climate that is mainly responsible. Needless to go over the old argument of the effect of climate upon civilization; remember only that

here, where there is struggle neither against heat nor cold, where, in short, half of man's immemorial conflict against nature is eliminated, his superfluous energy, so released from the primal curse, is free to be expended in actions impossible in climes not so favored.

With a climate approximately identical with that of Greece, Northern Italy and Japan, California has produced, or is beginning to produce, results in art similar to those great historic centers of culture. There is a stimulus to creative talent more potent than can be found elsewhere in the United States. It is the direct reflex, in the artistic climate, of the climate, as is the gambling and fighting spirit in the adventurous spirit. California does not yet foster art—but it creates artists—creates them and turns them loose, drives them, in her own esthetic poverty, to the great market places of the East. In literature, in painting, music and the drama may be found evidences of California's joy of life so spontaneous, so pronounced, that, never knowing the artist, one might almost recognize the source of the inspiration, and say: "There speaks the Golden State!"

More obvious, of course, is the effect of the climate upon the animal spirits. San Francisco has a reputation for being a wide open town, but it is more strictly an open air town. The easy invitation to outdoors has both good and ill effects. Home life, such as is characteristic of Eastern and English cities, gets scantier encouragement where for months at a time one may be sure of sunshine and warmth. Youth flocks to the streets, seeking adventure and temptation. It is a place for roving and for loving and don't hurry home.

In connection with this mild but stimulating temperature, a third factor enters to make life in San Francisco distinctive. This is the ever present influence of nature—the alluring proximity of the mountains and the sea. From thousands of porches and windows views of noble hills and sparkling waters exert their spell. One may see warships lying in the harbor, merchantmen in the upper bay, watch liners from South American

and Oriental ports march majestically in through the Golden Gate, discern Italian fishing smacks, lateen-rigged, with dyed sails, scurry in from the Farallones. Even the water front, provocative with hints of foreign climes, restless with the spirit of adventure, is not, as in most cities, remote. It is within easy reach of all. It is unescapable for those who live across the bay. Residents of a dozen lesser sleeping towns, Sausalito, Belvedere, Oakland, Piedmont, Berkeley, have twice a day the breath of ocean in their nostrils. They catch wondrous sea vistas, the channel of the Gate, the reaches of the lower bay, the distances toward Benicia and the marshes.

So, too, the vast playground of Marin County must be reckoned with as a part of San Francisco, accessible, within an hour's easy reach, in fact, with its forests and foothills clear to the heights of Tamalpais. Here a simple, natural life is possible, and is largely achieved. Through spring, summer and autumn the ferries are crowded with multitudes off for all day—yes, for all night, too; for months the weather is steady and sleep under the stars is easy, not only to hunters and fishermen, trampers and campers, but even to families who go forth to wander at large in the open. A campfire, a blanket and a song—can this compare with Coney Island or Atlantic City? This comradeship with nature gives the shop clerk new tone. He knows not only the orgy of flirtation and chianti at Carminetti's, the "bunny hug" at the "Forty Axes" Social Club, the "line" of saloons up Market Street and the faro game upstairs—but all is washed clean in the dews and fogs of the chaparral, the crystal waters of the Lagunitas, the wind from the Sierras.

This pastoral element amid such an adventurous scene makes all men children. It accounts indubitably for the native enthusiasm of loyalty. The San Franciscan, especially if he is a newcomer, is a "booster" for his city. He loves the place and wants others to know it. No other place in the United States can compare with it in the jubilant, eager devotion of its citizens.

It is a gay, pleasure loving town; it is

called by many a wicked town. This is, no doubt, because San Francisco possesses every joyous vice, with but few mean ones. Its faults are big and generous; it will have nothing less than murder or piracy. Partly, too, because it has not that curse of the more conventional-minded East—hypocrisy. That is not needed. It does not flaunt vice, but neither does it cloak it in Pharisaical denials. This freedom and sincerity amaze the stranger, but it is an evidence of that same large, buoyant naturalness that has made San Francisco's virtues beloved.

This abandon manifests itself in sensuousness rather than sensuality. It is apparent, for instance, in the restaurant life of the city. San Francisco is famous for the number and quality of its eating places—one fairly wonders if anyone ever dines at home. Liberal, accessible, various, drawing on tropical and temperate zones for its viands, on its own up-country for its wines, with ducks from nearby marshes and alligator pears from Hawaii, with its own little toothsome oysters from which the first cocktail was made, with native artichokes and figs and mangoes, the names of San Francisco's restaurants are known all over the world. Here centers the life of a large transient and flat inhabiting population. Here was given the first cabaret show. Here is the only restaurant where you can go to the seventh floor in a taxicab.

Equally characteristic is San Francisco's love for flamboyant celebrations. The city will arise in the morning and build canvas triumphal arches for any festivity which promises to enliven the streets. Its doors are thrown open to Knight Templars, Elks, Eagles or conventions of pastry cooks, Chautauquans or bankers—but freest of all to its own Native Sons of the Golden West. See a battalion of frolicking youths in white ducks and yellow-ribboned hats! See the striped canes, the live bears held in leash; see companies of red-cheeked strapping girls in flannels! See the marching Schuetzen Verein! See the Pioneers of '49! Now it is the Midwinter Fair, now the Portola commemo-



ration, next the Panama Canal hulla-baloo, or merely New Year's Eve, or Tetrizzini singing in the open street! San Francisco loves them all. It will welcome the fleet or the President, raise thousands in a night, build statues of prunes or endure the effigy of a patent medicine doctor made of cast iron. It is laughter loving, irresponsible. It turns out with glee to see a cotillion leader on the roof of the Palace Hotel toss turnips for a vaudeville performer to catch on a fork in his teeth; it will shrug its shoulders at a three months' war of Chinese tong men, so long as the fusillade keeps clear of the white man's city. San Francisco is carefree. Do as you please. Go to church on Sunday or go to the theater or to a baseball game. Eat crawfish or nuts.

San Francisco is a city of extremes. Nothing is too wonderful, too impossible, too commonplace to happen. They once found the skeleton of a Chinese woman buried upside down in the walls of a house on Stockton Street. In 1905 they were selling airship stocks in the open air by Lotta's Fountain. Neither was sensational enough to excite remark. Nothing is. Scandals die of inanition in such a tolerant atmosphere—dry up like mummies on a desert. A paragraph in the daily papers, and you hear no more of the amazing tale till it is embodied in a work of fiction by Gertrude Atherton or Jack London. Do as you please!

Swept by seafog and wind, lying for half the year under blue skies, San Francisco was to the eye a city of pearl gray. Now, with the rise of lofty modern office buildings, it is a white city. What else has changed? San Francisco's temper, lost in the fire—rather shall you call her "Frisco" than mention the earthquake—has not yet been restored. San Francisco is nervous now—nervous about the graft prosecution, nervous till lately about the Panama Canal celebration, nervous about her future, when the canal shall have been opened. Many business houses were wiped out of existence—the most have for six years done business on credit—on small margins, with a dread for what might come. Her future is now assured, and San

Francisco may relapse into its easy, careless attitude toward life—but not yet. It was a staggering blow she took smiling, and she still trembles with the suspense. For one short month or so she had her supreme glory—the altruism, the courage, the resource of those eventful days after the disaster when democracy and unselfishness reigned. Now she is busy at the task of rehabilitation, convalescence, and if she takes pleasure, takes it perhaps a bit more hurriedly—and perhaps, too, more grossly.

There is a hill there facing the Oakland shore; it is called Telegraph Hill. On the side toward the water front there is a precipitous cliff, two hundred feet high—the wonder of those who approach the city from the mainland. Under that cliff, contractors, despite all efforts of citizens to prevent them, have burrowed, quarried, excavated, tearing down the eminence—the most romantic part of the old town. Bit by bit the hill is despoiled. House by house the buildings on top are threatened, deserted, fall down the slope and are gone. It is typical of the "old" San Francisco, going, going, soon to be gone, men say. But Telegraph Hill is high and wide—it will last a good while yet.

And so, despite its cataclysm, its new regime of commerce, its control by labor, San Francisco may remain distinctive, unique, for many years. For still the climate exerts its magic spell. While, summer and winter, the temperature hovers regularly around fifty-five—never more than ten or fifteen degrees away—so long men and women in that city will have that extra ounce of blood, that enthusiastic surplus energy that shall continually urge them to action. Extremes will still be tolerated; a joyous abandon and simplicity will make life in the Golden West a bit more jubilant, a bit more free than elsewhere where men fight heat and cold. This is why San Francisco is herself—she has fresh air and breath to spare; this is why men spend their lives trying to convert others to their own affection, and throw open their heritage generously to the whole world.

# THE RULES OF THE GAME

By Paul Crissey

SACKETT had learned the rules of the game early in his career, and men said that he had learned them well. At any rate, it was something more than his enormous capacity for whiskey that led the biggest morning paper in the city to pay him what would ordinarily be considered two men's pay.

For the rules of the game, as Sackett had learned them, were barefaced and simple. He had learned to take what assignments the city editor gave him and ask no questions; to get all of a story and a little bit more, and to get it first. Fire, death, explosions, wrecks and earthquakes had found no place in Sackett's list of excuses for "falling down" on an assignment. It is true, however, that more than once in his life in what is known as the local room he had failed to report, and some friendly fellow worker had scoured the streets for the missing Sackett—once to find him in a mellow state of intoxication engaged in trying to kiss a benign old cab horse.

But fortunately these times were few and far between. Sackett had gray hair. The lines in his face were deep. It was said in the office that he never took a note—some men waste their lives and spoil their stories by drawing up lengthy notes and being unable to decipher them later.

"There's one thing about old Cotton-top," said Blaisdale, the night city editor, nodding toward Sackett's gray head: "when he goes out on a story, he always comes home with it, all nicely bottled up and ready to serve hot."

"That isn't going to get him anything in five years," grumbled the copy

reader, as he snipped a "filler" from a New York paper for the time hook. "You and the M. E. down in the mahogany office, and even the copy boys who fight now to carry his copy to the tube, will forget he ever lived as soon as he drops out of the game. Why," he growled, "if Sackett were to turn a bit of dirty work or get mixed up in a scandal, you'd print the whole thing—and he's been here under you for twenty years, at that!"

Blaisdale leaned back in his chair and his eyes narrowed to thin, cold lines.

"Yes," he admitted, "I'd print the story no matter who it was about, just so it was news. I'd print any sort of a story about anybody—my own family even—if it happened, and if it were news. It's one of the rules of the game—print the news!"

The copy reader's shears went snipping down a column, and he reached for his paste brush.

"Reminds me," snapped Blaisdale, "speaking of scandals, we've got to wind up that Evelyn Carmen case tonight. That's been hanging fire long enough, and the *Globe* scooped us yesterday with a set of pictures of her. Why don't some of you sleuths in this office go out and find her?" He raised his voice. "Sackett, come here a minute!"

Sackett dropped his cigarette and stepped on it, pulled a pencil from behind his ear, rubbed the spot where it had rested and leaned over Blaisdale's desk.

"What's doing?" he asked.

Blaisdale looked up and moved the glasses on his nose a trifle.

"I want you to clean up that Carmen story tonight. I've tried every man in

the office but you. Now go out and dig it up."

"Dirty story, isn't it?" queried Sackett.

"S'pose so," returned Blaisdale. "Wouldn't be much use in chasing it if it wasn't. She ran away from her husband the day they were married. Sort of 'left at the altar' kind, only there's a good bit of a mystery as to who it was she ran away to, or with. High society scandal—get the idea? There may be a dash of free love in it. At any rate, play it up for all it's worth. They say she's stopping somewhere in the city here, but I haven't been able to get a line on where."

A sudden look of disgust came over Sackett's face for a moment, and it seemed as if in that brief second his lips formed a protest, but the rules of the game were imbedded deep within him. Blaisdale was talking again.

"Leave the booze alone tonight, Sack," he requested. "Get in early and write the stuff for the mail edition."

"Haven't touched a drop for three weeks," muttered Sackett, and he ambled out of the room.

"Humph!" commented Blaisdale to the copy reader. "That accounts for his grizzly cheerfulness."

It was a bit unusual that Sackett should pass by unnoticed the hundred and one little stories that lay on every side as he walked slowly north. But this night Sackett's thoughts were far away. Perhaps, back in the time when he first pinned a star to the inside of his coat lapel, he had ambitions, or something equivalent to them. But the mechanical driving of his profession had obscured them. The only thoroughly happy newspaper man is the reformed one—if such a thing is possible.

In such a mood Sackett crossed the river, walked on north for several blocks, then cut west for a block. Finally he turned into an open hallway, mounted two flights of stairs and stopped before a dingy door.

Without knocking, he turned the knob and entered. A woman dressed in a simple white muslin turned her head, and a word of greeting fell from her lips.

Sackett closed the door, turned the key, then bent down and slid it underneath the door. He listened for a moment as it rattled down the stairs. Then he faced the woman.

"Evelyn Carmen," he said quietly, "I've come to get the story of your life for the greatest morning paper in the world. The people are hungry for the details, and they must be fed."

It must have been about one o'clock in the morning that the brass fire gong in the local room began to clangor for the twentieth time that night. But this time there was such a different note in its brazen voice that even the lone man in the corner emerged from his smoke clouds to lounge over to the tape.

"It's a four-eleven, Mr. Blaisdale—over on Dearborn and Seneca streets." That was all—the old, threadbare phrase that office boys have used since Ben Franklin was the city editor of a Philadelphia weekly. But it started something in the local room. Blaisdale's voice snapped like a Gatling gun.

"Crothers! Get over to Dearborn and the river. Freeze to the 'phone, and don't be afraid to tell me if you think the whole North Side will be in ashes before morning! We won't have to pay the insurance. Billy, get a good heartthrob story over there. Boarding house district, you know, full of chorus girls, undressed females courting pneumonia and crying landlords. Take McCurdy with you to handle the lead, and shoot some stuff in quick!"

"Damn that old soak of a Sackett!" growled Blaisdale. "I wish he'd roll in."

About two o'clock the telephone on Blaisdale's desk rang.

"Yes, Blaisdale. . . . Oh, yes, Sackett. What did you get? . . . Turn it in to me—too late to get in and write it yourself. You say you talked with her? . . . Good! Well, let's have it."

For a steady five minutes the night city editor's pencil slipped over the copy paper before him. And the notes which he took to the time of Sackett's even voice carried a story of love and romance, of a shattered life and forgotten

ambitions. But Blaisdale's face showed a keen joy as the story dropped deeper and deeper from the conventional lines. Finally he leaned back with the receiver to his ear.

"Fine work, old man! Where did you find the girl?"

"In a boarding house on Dearborn Street, near the river," came back Sackett's voice, a low thrill causing Blaisdale to sit up suddenly.

"Good God, man!" he shouted. "That's where the fire is!" And Sackett's voice answered calmly:

"I know it."

Blaisdale thought rapidly.

"Do you—can you— Great Scott, Sack—is the woman safe? Do you know?"

And again Sackett answered:

"She is not. She's in the building yet, and the whole block is in flames."

A shudder shot through the man at the desk.

"What a story—what a story!" he whispered to himself. Then suddenly an idea seized him.

"Sackett—what's the man's name? You haven't given it—quick! There's barely time to write the story and get it in. What's his name?"

"Blaisdale"—Sackett's voice sounded far away—"don't hurry. I—I want to just talk to you a while—it won't take long. I'm—I'm going to resign, Blaisdale, and I want to—to say good-bye. Won't get a chance to see the boys. Give Willie my best, old man—be sure to give Willie my best—and Crothers, too."

"Damn it!" rasped Blaisdale. "Give me the man's name, or the story isn't worth a straw!"

"Oh, yes," came the voice over the telephone. "The name"—and to Blais-

dale the voice sounded farther away—"the name of the man who loved the woman was—just—Sackett—Jefferson Sackett."

"You?" shouted Blaisdale. "You—Sackett?"

"Yes," answered the voice, "that's right, Blaisdale—Jefferson Sackett."

Blaisdale fell back in his chair, and his hand trembled so that he nearly dropped the receiver. Then he put it to his ear again quickly.

"Where—are you—now?" he asked in a shaking voice. His face was white. Every man in the office was staring at him, and the fear that showed itself upon the editor's face was reflected in theirs.

This time the answer was very faint.

"Why," said the voice, "I'm in the room—the room with the girl—the girl I love. She's fainted, Blaisdale, and I heard the key roll down the stairs when I came in. Smoke's getting thick. Don't forget—about Willie, I mean. It's a good story—Blaisdale—a good—story; and it's—in time—it's not too—late—"

The telephone dropped from the night city editor's shaking hand.

"Gone!" he whispered to the white faces about him. "He's gone—old Sackett!" And with a funny little sound he threw his head in his arms on the desk and cried like a baby.

"Say," said the copy reader a week later, "that Carmen story you printed read like a Sunday school tract—and no man's name mentioned. Thought you'd print a story about your own family, if you had to! It's the rules of the game—you said so yourself."

Blaisdale gazed out of the window and said nothing.



"WHAT are you doing for the uplift, Maude?"

"I am teaching poor girls the rudiments of bridge whist. And you?"

"Oh, I'm collecting cast-off automobiles to distribute among worthy persons."

# DOMESTIC HAPPINESS

By Walt Mason

**I**T is good to watch dear father as he blithely skips along, on his face no sign of bother, on his lips a cheerful song; peeling spuds and scraping fishes, putting doilies on the chairs, sweeping floors and washing dishes, busy with his household cares. Now the kitchen fire is burning; to get supper he will start—mother soon will be returning from her labors in the mart.

Poor tired mother! Daily toiling to provide our meat and bread! Where the eager crowd is moiling, struggling on with weary tread! Battling with stockjobbing ladies, meeting all their wiles and tricks, or embarking in the Hades of the city's politics! But forgotten is the pother, all the workday cares are gone, when she comes home to dear father with his nice clean apron on! "There's your chair," he says; "sit in it; supper will be cooked eftsoons; I will dish it in a minute—scrambled eggs and shredded prunes." It is good to watch him moving round the stove with eager zeal, in his every action proving that his love goes with the meal.

When the evening meal is eaten and the things are cleared away, then we sit around repeatin' cares and triumphs of the day; and the high resounding rafter echoes to our harmless jokes, to our buoyant peals of laughter, while tired mother sits and smokes. Thus her jaded mind relaxes in an atmosphere so gay, and she thinks no more of taxes or the bills that she must pay; smiles are soon her face adorning, in our nets of love enmeshed, and she goes to work next morning like a giantess refreshed.



## REMEMBRANCE

By Margaret Lyle

**S**WEET as lost youth and dearer than the balm  
Of unforgotten dreams, life's guerdon fair;  
Sweet as the song of spring, or as the calm,  
Deep slumber message which the autumns bear;  
Dear as the prairie to the Western heart;  
Dear as the sea to one who walks its sands;  
Dear as the treasured hope life holds apart;  
Dear as the touch of much beloved hands;  
Sweet as the gift of freedom to the bound;  
Sweet as the first long look that lovers know;  
Sweet as first kisses, or the golden sound  
Of words a loved voice murmurs soft and low:  
Sweeter than these is thought of one whose eyes,  
Speaking in passing, glimpsed me Paradise!

# JIMMIE'S WATERLOO

By H. C. Catlin

“**W**HY this sudden interest in mathematics, James?”

Jimmie made no answer but continued scratching upon a pad. Between intervals of chewing a stubby pencil and scratching a tousled head he had, for the matter of twenty minutes, been laboriously calculating some problem that necessitated the use of numerals, dollar signs and decimal points.

Jimmie was a relative of mine by marriage; that is to say, his sister and my wife were one and the same person. My curiosity in his mathematical endeavors was due to the fact that he had never before indicated any aptness at figures, and, indeed, had shown no interest whatever in such dull and prosy matters.

Moreover, I took a fatherly interest in him, and had on occasions accepted the responsibility of advising him as to the most graceful way of extricating himself from various difficulties more or less closely connected with his heart. This, I may say, was prompted in me both for the family's honor and by a personal concern for Jimmie's peace of mind. For James, as my wife calls him, is really a good fellow, albeit he has a most deplorable habit of falling in and out of love on the slightest provocation with anyone of the feminine sex from a total stranger to our neighbor's wife.

Consequently I marveled to find my susceptible relative engaged in any occupation so unromantic as addition and subtraction.

“Going to take up bookkeeping, James?” I asked.

“Nix on the bookkeeping, Bill,” said Jimmie, throwing down his pencil and reaching for my tobacco. Jimmie calls

me “Bill” when his sister is not about; otherwise it is “Will” or “William.”

“The fact is,” he continued, tossing a burnt match over his shoulder onto the rug, “I've got to spend twenty thousand dollars before next Sunday. Here it is Wednesday, and outside of the races I can't figure how I'm going to get rid of a bunch of money like that.”

I looked at him with surprise not unmixed with alarm. Jimmie was a student of the law, and examinations were due at the law school in about a month. Could it be possible—

“Been studying pretty hard for the exams, Jimmie?” I queried, laying my hand soothingly upon his shoulder.

“Rats!” he responded scornfully. “Leave it to me to avoid the brain fag from overstudy, Bill. I'm giving it to you straight. I've got to spend a fortune within the next three days or I'm a ruined man. Sit down and I'll expound.”

I sat down.

“Take a smoke and prepare for the worst,” said Jimmie, taking a cigar, badly bent, from his vest pocket and handing it to me.

I took the smoke and composed my worried features.

“Bill, this time it is the real goods. I'm in love this time sure, and she's the best girl the world has yet produced.”

I sighed with relief and straightened out the cigar. As I bit into the end of the weed I concentrated a stern gaze upon my incorrigible brother-in-law. The family honor was at stake again. I assumed a judicial air and prepared to do exact justice.

“It all happened in the most natural manner,” said Jimmie.

“Such things always do happen that

way with you, James. It comes natural with you," I said, and was about to say more.

"Cut out the rough stuff, William," said Jimmie, eyeing me knowingly. "I could a tale unfold myself."

"Well, well," said I hastily, "go ahead with your story, Jimmie." Ancient history always did grate on my nerves.

"Well," said Jimmie, growing reminiscent while I tried to look bored, "I met Edith the first time at the field day. You remember the last field day, don't you, Bill?"

I remembered the last field day all right. Jimmie had borrowed ten dollars from me on that occasion to loan to a friend, who—well, it doesn't matter. Jimmie got the ten, and other things happened as well—but let them pass also.

"Well," continued Jimmie, "I didn't really meet Edith at the field day—that is, formally. I wasn't introduced to her. I only saw her and she saw me. She was with the Martins, and of course there's nothing doing between the Martins and me since the time when Jack Martin and I got pinched for swiping that sign on New Year's Eve. You remember that time, don't you, Bill?"

Oh, yes, I remembered that occasion also. Jimmie has a way of reminding me of so many events whenever we converse that it is with difficulty that I confine myself to a single episode when I reflect upon his exciting career.

"Edith and I saw one another at the field day," he went on, "and it was the most natural thing in the world for me to bow to her when I met her at the depot about a week later. I helped her on the train. In fact, I rode with her down to Elmhurst and met her folks. Funny way I met the folks."

"You are a progressive young man, James," said I. "Didn't the young lady display some slight objection to such headlong procedure?"

"Lord, no!" said Jimmie. "That's just the point. She saw at a glance that I'm not of the common sort; and, inasmuch as she had missed her friends at the train, what possible objection could she have had to a gentleman assisting

her to carry her suitcase down the road a piece?"

"None whatever, I am sure," I responded. "But how about the family, Jimmie?"

"Ah," said Jimmie, "right here is where I show you what a bally ass I made of myself, and why I am compelled to spend a fortune before Sunday."

"The train got into Elmhurst late and there was no one to meet Edith at the station, so naturally I escorted her home. Her father is a retired manufacturer of some sort, I gathered. Got a swell little place down at Elmhurst where they live except a few months in the winter when they stay in town. Edith lives there with her father, mother, a couple of sisters and an aunt or two."

"I guess I lingered a little overtime at the doorway, kind of sparring for her last name and an invitation to call. I was leaning gracefully against the side of the porch close in by the door. I was holding her hand while I said good-bye, and was telling her how much I had enjoyed the trip and what a splendid place Elmhurst was, when we heard a racket inside the house as if a number of people were running from a fire. I'd heard a bell ringing furiously for several minutes, but as Edith seemed about to weaken and come through with the invitation to call, I had paid no attention to the bell. Just at the psychological moment the door burst open and the family trooped out into our midst. By Jove, I had had my elbow in the electric button and had been ringing the bell in the house like mad for Lord knows how long!"

"Well, Edith was game all right. Introduced me as 'Mr. Harcourt,' whom she had met at some swell function in town and who had kindly escorted her home, having dropped off at Elmhurst on business."

"Whew! But it was a corker, I can tell you! I rose right up to the occasion, though, and met the enemy like a true American. Was welcomed into the bosom of the family, and, while I don't pose as an international diplomat, I have to hand it to myself that I sure went some on that festive occasion."

"But right here," said Jimmie, "is



where the bally ass appears upon the horizon with long and waving ears and loud and trenchant voice. I proceeded to play the wealthy role with that family. Talked about automobiles, yachts, summer cruises and all that kind of stuff. To sum up, as we lawyers say, I am worth just a cool twenty thousand dollars, which I must dispose of between now and Sunday."

"But why, Sunday, Jimmie?" said I.

"I have grave fears," said that young worthy, "lest some handsome wretch may try to cut in on me down Elmhurst way, and I have therefore promised myself to propose to Edith next Sunday. I can't honestly become engaged to her with all this mythical wealth. That would be obtaining a fiancée by false pretenses. Consequently I must spend or lose my money. I don't dare tell her the truth. Edith would never stand for a piker."

"By a 'piker' I presume you mean a prevaricator," said I heartlessly.

"Just so," said Jimmie sadly.

"Well, don't worry, old man," said I. "Put away the pad. It's no use figuring. You've got to lose the money in one lump sum, in a single consignment as it were. You cannot do it piecemeal if you are compelled to get rid of twenty thousand dollars in three days."

I considered the matter for a few moments.

"I'll tell you how you might do it, Jimmie," said I, looking up. I paused. Jimmie was gazing at me with a curiously happy look on his face. I was about to speak and unfold my scheme for the dissipating of his fortune.

"Bill," he shouted, checking my remarks, "you're a brick! It's a capital idea. I'll do it, by thunder!"

I caught my breath.

"But—Jimmie," I stammered helplessly, "I—I didn't suggest anything."

"Don't say a word, Bill," he cried, grabbing his hat. "I'll thank you in more fitting terms at a later date. I'm off now to send Edith a wire that I'll be down Sunday. Ta, ta!" And he dashed out of the room.

"He's too deep for me," said I to myself. "I wonder what deviltry he's up

to now?" I shook my head and gave it up.

It was a fortnight before I was again at leisure to give consideration to my brother-in-law's financial difficulties. The doleful sound of Jimmie's flute coming from his room reminded me of his unfortunate wealth.

"James," said I, as I took a seat in his little room, which he called a den but which looked more like a stationer's shop with a good line of posters on display, "judging from the sorrowful tones which you are drawing from that musical instrument, and the likewise mournful aspect of your countenance, you must still be a very rich man. Have you succeeded in materially lowering your alleged bank account?"

"Bah!" said Jimmie sourly. "Never again let me hear the sound of money."

"Too good to be true," said I under my breath.

Jimmie has an inheritance due when he becomes twenty-one. But in the meantime he had never before shown the slightest aversion to the sound of money. Indeed, he has always displayed such a carelessness in dispensing whatever cash he can lay his hands upon that his sister has become convinced that he will end his days in the poorhouse. Accordingly his unmercenary words interested me. I sat up hopefully and took notice.

"Didn't your idea work all right, Jimmie?" I asked.

"Oh, the idea worked all right, all right," he responded. "I went down to Elmhurst that Sunday and told Edith that I had lost my money and was stone broke. I asked her to marry me, and told her my sad story with all the melodramatic agony which naturally results when you find yourself ruined and compelled to go to work after having lived a life of luxury for years. You know how they do it on the stage, Bill; how the wealthy man plunges heavily in Wall Street, and how the other fellow, who loved his wife when she was a girl, puts up a job on him and robs him out of his millions on a deal in Dahomey copper or something else equally as valuable. You can see the ruined man, white of hair and haggard of eye, standing in a little office

with one chair, a rolltop desk, a telephone and a glass case, out of which he pulls miles of blank white tape while he tears his hair and tell the audience how it happened. He is never execution proof because he never fails to tell the people down in the pit that he will pay his debts; he will sell the family plate and oil paintings, the horse and buggy and will put up the dear old home at auction. And then poor Catherine will take in washing, Margie will have to take up typewriting and good old Jack and father will go out West and make another fortune.

"Well, I gave all that to Edith and more besides. Told her that I was young and strong and knew that I could work and support her. Did just what you suggested to me."

"Why, Jimmie," I remonstrated, "I didn't suggest anything to you."

"Yes, you did," said Jimmie. "You may not have said anything, but just looking at you gave me the idea."

"What idea?" said I, growing suspicious.

"Why, I knew it wouldn't sound very good to tell Edith that I had been dabbling in stocks, so I told her that you had been speculating and had been hit pretty hard on the Exchange. Told her that I had lent you my bankroll to pull you out, and that I wouldn't get it back probably for a couple of years or so."

"Look here, you young scamp," I shouted, jumping up and banging my fist down on his table, "that's altogether too much! I won't be dragged into your idiotic scrapes. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. I'll—"

"Tut, tut," said Jimmie. "Be calm, William." He got that last expression from his sister. "Don't get so excited," waving his hand with a nonchalant air. "There's a big vein standing out on your forehead which will surely break if you

don't sit down. Sis would never forgive me if you had a stroke." I sat down a trifle disconcerted, and rubbed my forehead. "You excitable chaps," he continued, "should take a lesson from me. If you had been the recipient of a blow such as has been recently dealt to me, you would be expected to do something rash. But with me, no. I control myself. I exert my tremendous will power, although inwardly I seethe with awful and sanguinary thoughts."

"Rot," said I. "I want this abominable story about me corrected immediately."

"It will not be necessary, Bill," said Jimmie, and sorrow tinged his voice. "Edith didn't believe a word I told her. She laughed so loud that I thought she would burst when I told her about you."

"What!" I exclaimed.

"She knew all about me all along," he continued. "She had pointed me out to Jack Martin at the field day and asked him who I was. The infernal beast told her that I was the biggest liar this side of the Mississippi; that I was a disgrace to my sister and a great worry to my family. What do you know about that?"

I breathed easy again.

"Not a word of truth in it, Jimmie, I assure you," I responded.

"Of course not," agreed Jimmie.

I smiled discreetly.

"But the worst is yet to come," he continued in hollow tones. "I have a hideous suspicion lurking in the corner of my brain."

"What is it?" I asked.

"I have been wondering if that girl was kidding me from the start."

"Nonsense," said I. "Impossible;" and I smiled audibly. "Whatever put that idea into your head, Jimmie?"

"Oh, I don't know," sighed Jimmie. "Only—Edith was engaged to Jack Martin all the time."



**G**IRLS, this is Leap Year—but look before you leap.

# WHEN EAST MEETS WEST

By Adachi Kinnosuke

I BEAT the sun that August day for a walk up the Suwa Hill. When I came home I saw Shizuo, my brother, leaning against the gatepost, a cigarette between his lips:

"Berabol" said he. "Great unusualness! Very early—impossibly too early for your honorable presence. What's happened? Where have you been?"

"I've mounted the hill, brother above," said I. "And I'll give you a thousand guesses and bet you a square egg—but what's the use? You'd never dream of what I have been doing. You are too busy thinking all manner of mean things about me—just like all good brothers. What have I been doing? Why, something for your august presence—as usual."

"Oh, of course—of course! *Mot-tainaiyo*, forsooth!"

"Well, now, I have. I've been offering prayers to the august gods."

At which brother laughed, and his feeble, sidewise shaking of his head told me that it was entirely too much for his religious faith.

"Fact," said I, "and praying, too, to more gods than I had any idea of before. A day like gold brocade, isn't it?"

"*Sodal* There is no room for *guzu-guzu* for this day," he agreed, looking toward the east, where the newborn day was breathing the breath of life into a pile of pearl and gold a little to the north of the Island of Awaji.

It was the day for the international swimming contest—the first of the kind ever held in Nippon waters. America, France, Germany, England, Australia, India and Japan were all represented. It was a big event for the people of Kobe.

Our family in particular was in the fever of excitement.

My brother Shizuo was a contestant. He had held the championship of the Chinu waters for four consecutive summers, and at the national preliminary contest at Hiroshima he had won over the field of two hundred contestants from all over the empire.

I told my brother what he himself knew well enough:

"The talk on the winds is that you are the favored of the God of Luck. Much gold has been heaped on the promise of your skill."

"Men talk," said he contemptuously.

"Yes," I retorted, "and as for Miss Honorable Toyo, she goes a bit further."

"She? Pray, what does she say?"

"The very honor of the sun flag hangs—"

"Yes, yes, I know. I very much fear that she has planted her ghost too deeply in my skill."

I added:

"According to her way of thinking, the history of the Battle of the Japan Sea should be told in a brief footnote compared to the story of this day's contest."

We were rather early on the ground. The stretch of yellow beach to the south of Wada Point was glittering and buzzing with smiles and laughs with gay eyes and gayer dresses of women, and with much more vanity and luster than all the gold of the Shogun. The pine trees, rather gray with the memory of myriad storms doubtless, were made gay perforce; they were beribboned like the girls at their first dances with the

flags of the nations whose representatives camped under them.

The old tree which sported the sun flag was a close neighbor to the other which waved aloft, as if it were thoroughly conscious of the honor conferred, the Stars and Stripes. My brother, with Miss Toyo in her crested *chirimen*, looking more like a magnolia than a peony, led the way, and I tagged after them, loaded with flags, a parasol and a wicker case. We passed in front of the American camp. I thought I heard someone say something about the "little Jap champion." My brother was talking with Miss Toyo, and seemed not to hear the remarks about him.

"Oh, here he comes! Isn't he a stocky little devil? Better look out for him, Jim!" said a low whisper, which, however, was quite loud enough for me to catch distinctly. "He looks like the real thing!"

"Him? That little sawed-off son of a samurai?" answered a low, genial laugh. "I'll pile more water between him and me than he can drink long before the day's over; don't you worry."

This made me look up sharply at the owner of the good-natured laugh. And I saw a gawky, elongated, exaggerated gorilla 'way beyond six feet in height and almost as hairy, and whose frank face had so much of that miraculous mixture of the sheer joy of living and the indifference to it, that crest of youth victorious, that in spite of all my prejudice and partiality I could not help but smile. I had seen his photograph often enough in the shop windows and in the newspapers; I knew him for the American representative at the contest.

It was a five-mile race, from the Wada Beach to a point off Awaji Island and back.

My brother was a marvelous swimmer. Our faith in him was great. The very thought of looking over the field of contestants had a hint of the traitorous about it. But somehow I felt uncomfortable; I felt much like a coward shivering under the invisible witchery of fate's irony. Was it the hasty glance I had of the American that so withered and sickened my high hopes within me?

That was of course ridiculous. Didn't I remember well how my brother once swam away from a huge German and made him look like a waddling tadpole?

Still—the trouble was—hang it all, there was a woman in the case, as usual, as in all other young people's troubles. To come out flatfooted, it was Miss Toyo. Naturally he was almost insane over this contest; he was so anxious to win it—not so much for the honor of the flag, I fancy, but that was the way Miss Honorable Toyo and all other women put it.

Sharp at three in the afternoon the pistol was fired; the race was on.

The sky was stainless above; as for the sea, it was garnished with all the colors of pleasure boats, stately yachts and a hundred fishing smacks in their shameless masquerading finery. The entire course was a rainbow-bordered turquoise path.

Shizuo wore a white swimming suit, which made him conspicuous. It was the gift from Miss Toyo. She had knit it herself, a handsome affair of silk and wool.

There was nothing dramatic about the start. Evidently every swimmer was thinking of one and the same thing—how to husband his energy.

Then suddenly Miss Honorable Toyo exclaimed:

"Honorably review! Number One, he leads!"

Many eyes turned in her direction, and to most of them the appearance of Miss Toyo gave anchor. She was dressed in gray, as soft as the twilight sea, upon which her family crest stood out sharply. The white inner collar of her dress brought out the luster of her black hair, and the oval of her dainty face was rich in sun tan and the color of youth. Her black eyes lighted it with a magic glow, and her lips warmed it with the touch of fire. Excitement over the race became her much better than rouge and powder on other girls' faces. "Look, look at him now! He has left them all!"

It was true; the white of my brother's swimming suit and the bronze of his shoulder flashed in the sun, yards ahead of the fanlike spread of contestants.

There was a goodly ribbon of shining sea between him and the next aspirant. All it meant to me was that Shizuo was a trifle nervous, nothing more. To Miss Toyo, however, this initial lead was a prophecy of the final victory, which heightened her color.

On the extreme left wing—that is to say, to the lee of the northeast breeze which was stiffening every minute—was the American, clothed in his national flag. He was lean and sinuous as a *kamo*. Most of the swimmers were sporting overhand, *tenuki*, “stork’s wings” and other fancy strokes for the edification of the buntings and fans which bordered their blue course to fame; he alone was simply pillowing the swells and gliding over them in a manner which seemed decidedly lazy. It must be confessed, however, the ease and the abandon with which he threw himself into the good graces of the waves were both wonderful and charming to behold. And as I watched him, fascinated, a sort of chill of presentiment went down the length of my spine and oppressed me to such an extent that I found myself whispering to nobody in particular: “*Nani!* He won’t do it, that American!”

The swimmers had now rounded a flagged buoy off the coast of Awaji, marking the turn of the course. There had been forty-eight entries; there were only eleven of them left in the race now. Others had either been gathered into the arms of their friends and smothered in regrets and sympathy, or they were lagging so far astern that to call them a rear guard was to flatter their reckless go-aheadness.

My brother was still in the lead; he had maintained it throughout. That was something new with him. In other contests he had always allowed someone to forge ahead of him—to have him set the pace.

The American was the third in a straight line formation, for the populous fan shape had long since vanished. A fisherlad from Awaji was tagging close on my brother’s heels. He was famous under the name of “Baby Seal”; he was a sunburned ball of grace on the water.

With all that he was not the one who hung heavily upon my heart. I knew just about what he could do; we all did. It was the American with his “to the devil with the lot” air of superb indolence who was as uncertain as Manchuria in the Far Eastern politics. He edged our nerves—Miss Honorable Toyo’s as well as mine.

“Oh, how I do hate that whale-big American!” said she, biting her pretty lip. That was the time when the American slipped ahead, so like a porpoise, and took away the second place from the fisherlad of Awaji. A few moments later, she added: “Ah, good! Pray review—the little ‘Baby Seal’ is ahead of the American whale!”

When about four miles of the course had been covered, Shizuo for the first time yielded the premier place to “Baby Seal.”

“Now—from now on,” said Honorable Miss Toyo in a fitful breath, and her eyes shining with a strange fever—“from now on things begin to be white-faced”—that is to say, at once serious and interesting.

“*Domoi!*” complained I, rather to myself than to her. “That stepbrother of a shark in red, white and blue—in my humble thoughts, there’s a fellow that one can’t swallow. I fear we can’t catch him—neither by chopsticks nor by a ten-foot pole.”

Just then the American was pulling himself up even with my brother; it looked as if he were about to pass Shizuo.

“Oh, how I do loathe him!” said Miss Toyo, her eyes bigger than ever. “See him sneer at Shizuo—did you see him?”

Which spoke a volume for the vividness of her imagination, but I knew well that no mortal eye could catch a sneer at that distance.

And thus—“Baby Seal” leading, Shizuo and the American almost even for the second place, they entered the last mile of the race. Soon I heard Honorable Miss Toyo say: “Deign to look—look! That’s the first time that he slipped past Shizuo—look!”

Through the glass I watched them intently; yes, the American had forged

ahead. But there was something about Shizuo—the ease and grace of strokes and movements which spelt out the superb confidence within him and the complete mastery he had over himself, and the utter absence of fatigue, among other things—all of which gave me “heart ease.”

Just before the half of the last mile of the course was covered, the expected happened: “Baby Seal” offered up his *namuamida butsu*—praises to the grace of our Lord Buddha the Merciful—that is to say, said his “amen” or, to put it in up-to-date sporting American, “blew up.”

The American and Shizuo passed the fisherlad—the American leading by fully a length. But neither of them seemed to know that such a fellow ever existed between earth and the moon.

Poetry and grace were now completely dead in the movements of the two swimmers. The battle royal was on.

Suddenly Shizuo dived. That was a pretty trick he had. This diving trick of his was always effective in two ways: in the first place, nature had endowed him with a power to travel faster under the surface of the water, for a brief period, than over the face of it. It also served to snap the tension of the dead heat effort of his opponent.

“Ah!” exclaimed Miss Toyo, almost beside herself with excitement by this time. “Ah! There he goes! Honorably deign to see how magic-wonderfully he does it! Pray review! He’s ahead—he’s ahead!”

The feat was remarkable—so remarkable that the foreigners applauded much more loudly than we did ourselves. The trick was new to the foreign spectators. We had seen him do that often enough with an inevitable result. Shizuo did not dive deeply, merely a foot or two under the surface; that was all.

And he bobbed up almost under the very nose of the American.

The American almost leaped out of the water; the shock was so unexpected; it was enough to surprise anyone. When he saw that it was neither a killer whale nor a monster stingray, we heard some-

thing which sounded like a cross between a snort and a laugh.

With another white blossoming of spray, down went Shizuo again, like a torpedo just launched into the sea. He came up and went down again—once, twice, three times; and thus he succeeded in putting fully three yards of water between himself and the American. But the clear, dancing sun gilt ribbon of water did not remain long between the two swimmers. The powerful strokes of the American, which seemed to have lost all their holiday languor and leisure, ate up the distance in no time. He was on the heels of my brother—he was up with him—he was ahead of Shizuo by the whole length of his long body!

Shizuo dived again, repeated the trick, recovered the lost ground—only to lose it again in a heartrendingly short space of time. Heaven only knows how many times he was forced to repeat the trick. Of one thing I am very certain: he had never done half as much diving at any of the previous meets as he did on this desperate occasion. And every time he repeated the trick, the less ground he gained over the American.

And irresistible, impersonal, utterly deaf, dumb and blind to all the emotional storms in the hearts of us all—especially in that of Honorable Miss Toyo—stood the finish line. Yes, within less than a quarter of a mile now!

And once more the American forged ahead.

“Oh—oh!” came from between the clenched teeth of Miss Honorable Toyo, and out of her eyes madness was staring—the madness which did not take the trouble of wearing a mask, “Oh, how I do loathe that—that man! I could—I just could—”

Shizuo dived again. The American did not pay any attention to him this time. He was pulling for the finish line with all the great force which was within his stalwart frame. He seemed to know that his opponent had a mere trick where he should have had reserve energy; that the race was his.

He was mistaken. At least it did seem so as Shizuo, with what was a superhuman burst of speed, born of



desperation of the most extreme type doubtless, dropped the American astern. There was a burst of applause which tore the deathly silence of a second before. But before the echoes were dead on the hills of Awaji, the American was upon Shizuo like a veritable battleship running down a torpedo destroyer.

It was then that a thing happened.

Just what it was I cannot tell. I doubt whether there be any mortal who can—not even the American. What flashed before our strained eyes was something like this:

There was a sudden churning of water right in front of the American, a white fount of scattering spray. Something seemed to spin in the heart of the fountain; and over the swells of the Wada seas came to us a sound which was like a groan of a soul falling through a depth.

The impetus of his terrific pace shot the American ahead past the fountain of spray.

Within about a hundred feet of him, dead ahead, was the finish line.

The spectators gasped for a brief second in their effort to grasp the meaning of that tiny fountain and the sudden disappearance of Shizuo.

As we recovered from the first shock, we saw the American circling and doubling back on his course—as if he had suddenly forgot the very existence of the finish line toward which he had been battling so terrifically.

Swift as his movements were, he had to dive for the fast sinking body of brother Shizuo. A moment later, had he sunk to a certain depth, all the lifeboats and all the life saving crews in the world could never have saved Shizuo.

What followed was a chaos of hysterical storm, utterly indescribable.

Well, who won the race—the American?

Oh, no! "Baby Seal" won that—only there was not a mortal on Wada Beach curious enough to ask about that that day.

The tall, gawky form in red, white and blue swayed from side to side as he dragged up the waterlogged and almost unconscious body of Shizuo upon the beach. The American gasped for breath and shook the salt water out of his red eyes, stooping low.

It was at this precise juncture that a tiny whirlwind of colors and silk, hurled itself at his neck. It almost felled him; big as he was, the American did stagger back a step or two.

"I—oh, I—I—" Miss Honorable Toyo sobbed as she hugged the American's neck for dear life. Of course the American was dripping wet; what did Miss Toyo care? She wept upon his neck as if her heart were breaking into a thousand pieces.

In course of innumerable eternities, the American finally managed to untie the girl's arms from his neck and put her down there on the yellow sands beside Shizuo, who was fast recovering himself. The American meanwhile recognized the girl as the one who had passed in front of the American camp in company of Shizuo and me.

"There, now, little girl," said he, with a disreputably shaky attempt at a laugh meant to be very gruff and superior but which was palsied with embarrassed shyness, "it's all right; he's all right. He'll be good as new in a minute. Saved him? Thunderation! You wouldn't suppose that I'd let a man—a good man like that—die before I'd trim him good and proper in a fair and square fight, would you? No, not on your life!"



"SHE that stares much from the window spins not much"—but when she does spin she can reel off some interesting bits about the neighbors.



CHIVALRY—A courteous gallantry you cheerfully extend to a woman—if she chances not to be your wife.



# PEACE AND WAR

By Clifford Evans Van Hook

**F**AIR towers lined clear and bold against the sky,  
And canyons where men strive for wealth and power,  
The rush and roar of traffic, and the cry  
Of all humanity and life, in life's full hour.

*The throbbing tread of armed foreign feet,  
Strange banners waving in the market place,  
The heart of Commerce that has ceased to beat,  
The terror-haunted eyes of each white face.*

The peaceful countryside where well tilled fields  
Yield up their golden stores of harvest grain,  
The warmth and happiness of cheerful homes,  
The scent of meadows, wet with warm spring rain.

*The red low glare of burning towns, the cry  
Of frightened children in the awesome night,  
When thunders speak to thunders, and the charge  
Sweeps down the valley in its crimson might.*

The murmur of the little waves that lap  
Against the vessel's prow as on she glides;  
The helmsman croons a wanderer's song of home  
And fears no more the treacherous rocks and tides.

*A line of leaden gray against the sky,  
The crash of closing breech, the stand-by bell,  
A faint far view of battle flags at mast  
And then—a breathless hour of lurid hell.*



**I** AWOKE last night and found my wife searching my pockets. She was reading a letter she had found there, and was much embarrassed when I spoke to her."

"What did she say?"

"She said she was collecting material for a lecture."



**A** fellow in Kansas says that he doesn't mind hearing the leaves whisper and the zephyrs sigh, but he dreads to hear the grass mown.

# THE IMPERSONATOR

By Eleanor M. Ingram

MISS HOWARD leaned forward in her box, laying one small, unsteady hand on the velvet-covered rail before her. That she, fastidiously well bred by inheritance and training, should be guilty of the *inconvenance* of listening to the conversation of those in the box behind her own was incredible—but nevertheless a fact. She was listening, while her large, intent dark eyes followed the movements of the girl on the stage.

She was a superb creature—even there in that artificial atmosphere she carried an effect of vigorous reality. She was dancing—a slow half-Spanish dance of measured paces and bending movements that somehow, while graceful enough, was singularly lacking in all those alluring feminine appeals of glance and gesture which usually accompany such performances. She managed most deftly her long black satin skirts, and the brilliant dark blue eyes behind her darkened lashes flashed an engaging gaiety across the delighted and applauding audience, yet Philippa Howard acknowledged to herself that the applause seemed greater than the performance warranted. She looked again at her program, at the heavy black lines standing out above the list of names in ordinary type:

BERTIE LACY, THE GREAT IMPERSONATOR  
(The only Gibson Girl who isn't)

Philippa read over again the apparently meaningless sentence. *What* was it that Bertie Lacy was not? She raised her serious, questioning gaze to the stage, surveying the other girl. But all the time she was listening to the voices of the three overdressed, overfed, overwined men in the next box, when the music left their speech audible.

"All the same, I'll bring Bertie Lacy to supper tonight," the loudest tones were heard asserting, coarsely confident. "What? Oh, I know all about the turn-downs Bertie gives to invitations, but I won't get turned down—not tonight."

"Why not?" queried a companion.

The girl on the stage was standing still. From somewhere she had caught up a lace scarf and flung it over her fair head; her hands were filled with the red roses that take the place of orange blossoms at a Spanish wedding. Now, as the orchestra fell into silence, she suddenly began to speak.

She was an Andalusian girl awaiting the summons to her marriage; the wild passionate, hurried love story she told was her own. Her speaking voice had the flexibility of a musical instrument and its swaying power; a low, strong contralto, almost a tenor voice in pitch. Keenly attentive, the quiet audience followed the narration, Philippa Howard with the rest, feeling and seeing what Bertie Lacy willed, shaken by alien emotion. When at last the panting and triumphant girl dropped her roses to bend her head over the crucifix drawn from her bosom, her inarticulate, vehement cry of happiness closed eloquently the story unfinished in words.

For a moment applause was not thought of; before it broke forth, the figure on the stage was gone.

The people would have Bertie Lacy back, and they did. Philippa clapped her hands as steadily as the others, her delicate, too earnest face flushed with unusual color. She recognized here an art; this *was* a great impersonator.

"Why are you so confident that your invitation will be accepted tonight?"

came one of the voices from the box, returning to the interrupted discussion.

Bertie Lacy was on the stage again, a kerchief pinned over the black dress and a blue ribbon binding her fair hair. The abrupt silence of the satisfied people let the man's reply come clearly to Philippa's hearing:

"Because it's Bertie's twenty-fifth birthday, as I happen to know. Everybody who isn't home is lonesome on his birthday, and Bertie will be no exception."

The listening girl caught her breath her eyes widening and darkening. What but that loneliness had sent her, Philippa Howard, to a vaudeville theater this evening? And now a twin loneliness was to send this other girl to a questionable supper table. She looked toward the stage with an outrush of protectiveness and indignant pity.

Bertie Lacy was seated on a rough bench, a shawl drawn around her shoulders, her eyes fixed on the ground. It was a very simple story, of a lover's quarrel and of a fisherman who sailed out not to return, that the quiet, almost monotonous voice told—told with all the self-repression and heavy rigidity of the North Sea people. But it carried its effect. Philippa felt her lashes wet; even the men in the next box were quiet.

As the applause died away Philippa distinguished the sound of moving chairs behind her.

"Well, boys, I'll go around to the little side door and catch Bertie," announced the confident voice.

The girl's small dark head lifted indignantly. She half turned, then impulsively snapped open a silk bag hanging from her wrist, took from it a card and pencil and wrote:

MY DEAR MISS LACY:

I have just been told that today is your twenty-fifth birthday. It is also mine. If just supper with another girl is not too dull, will you not give me the very great pleasure of passing the rest of this evening at my home? I will meet you wherever you suggest.

Sincerely yours,  
PHILIPPA FAIRFAX HOWARD.

A button in the wall summoned an attendant.

"Please deliver this to Miss Bertie Lacy," she ordered.

The boy scrutinized her oddly, hesitating, but received without comment the note and a coin.

Rosed with excitement, wondering at herself, at once afraid and expectant, Philippa tried to turn her attention to the trick violinist now occupying the stage. What would Bertie Lacy answer? Would she answer at all? But she did not regret writing for one moment. She was so tired of monotony; a break was welcome, even if it hurt.

The violinist had retired and a new number was commencing. The time seemed very long. Philippa looked resolutely before her at the performer.

"Miss Howard?"

She turned swiftly and found the messenger at her shoulder.

The note was on square cut, rather large white paper.

MY DEAR MISS HOWARD:

I appreciate very much your kind invitation for this evening. It will give me great pleasure to join you whenever you leave the theater.

Very sincerely yours,

BERTIE LACY.

Philippa looked up at the boy, quite unconscious of her own radiant eagerness.

"Please tell Miss Lacy that we are leaving at once," she requested.

Again he gave her a curious glance that she was too absorbed to notice, but he obeyed without question.

There was a second occupant of the box, who had not moved or spoken during the last hour. To her Philippa presently turned.

"Auntie," she summoned caressingly.

The tiny, misty-eyed old lady sat erect.

"Yes," she responded—"yes, yes, Margarita."

"You have not cared for the evening, dear?"

"Yes, yes, Margarita."

But she did not look toward the stage; she had not done so since their arrival.

"Shall we go home?" Philippa gently suggested.

"Yes," with some animation. "Yes, if you are ready."

Philippa slipped into her own cloak of white silk and fur, folded her aunt in sealskin and they passed out.

In the lobby there was no Bertie Lacy. Philippa slowly moved on, out into the biting cold air, across the sidewalk to the limousine that rolled forward to meet them. She had put her aunt into the vehicle, when a tall girl in black advanced from the building's shadow.

"Miss Howard?" interrogated the strong, flexible voice so individual in quality.

"Yes," Philippa assented, holding out her hand. "And you are Miss Lacy. It is so good of you to come."

"It is you who are good," corrected the other. "You—are not alone?"

"My aunt is with me; Miss Fairfax."

They looked at each other, not in casual inspection, but with a full, straight encounter of glances and attention. Bertie Lacy, wrapped in a heavy masculine fur coat worn over the black satin gown used on the stage, dwarfed the fragile patrician, not only in stature, but in vital force and energy. But Philippa Howard had much the advantage of ease and poise; her guest showed a strange hesitation, almost a reluctance in accepting the invitation to enter the motor car. It almost seemed that she would have drawn back if a group of laughing young men had not emerged from the theater at that moment.

"Home, please," Philippa directed the chauffeur, and smiled at Bertie Lacy with the frank delight of a victorious child. "You will not find that too stupid, Miss Lacy? It will be so vivifying to have you among prosaic everyday things—like finding Titania in a solemn Puritan garden."

"Titania? I?"

"Well, someone magical, at least," Philippa laughed. "You cannot know"—her sensitive face sobered—"how magical it seems to have you here. I—I have so longed to talk to someone who was young."

"I—" began Bertie Lacy hurriedly, and left the sentence unfinished.

"You think it strange for me to say that?" Philippa leaned to draw closer her aunt's coat and put the robe about

her. "We are much alone, auntie and I. You see, I was brought up in a Canadian convent until two years ago when I returned to my grandfather's house. I had only Aunt Rose and him. Last year he died. He would have no new friends or new people at home; I know no one in New York."

"Surely that is because you wish it so."

"Perhaps; we are too dignified for comfort, we Howards. Oh, I know what you are thinking, but you—I said you were magical! Besides, you were just another girl; if you were not, nothing could have induced me to write you."

At the mere thought she flushed transiently. Bertie Lacy colored also, a heavy, painful crimson that was slow to fade, and bent her head without replying.

The drive was not long. The limousine halted opposite a handsome house in a quiet avenue, the chauffeur opened the door and the three descended. The cold was intense; a vicious north wind whined through the bleak streets; but on the threshold of the house Bertie Lacy stopped decisively, facing the girl hostess.

"Miss Howard," she said, almost with appeal.

Philippa laid her small hand on the other's arm, unheeding.

"Listen to the sleighbells, Miss Lacy! I listened to them so long this evening, as they came and went, they tinkled of so much fun and festivity, and rang through so many memories of holidays in my Canadian convent, that I could not bear the lonely house. I ran away to the theater with Aunt Rose. And there I found you, to make my birthday evening happy, after all. Let us go in."

Firelight, tinted electric lamps and the fragrant presence of flowers relieved the somberly rich interior. The background suited Philippa, who emerged from her furs a slender, fragile figure clad in white silk, her dark hair braided and coiled low. But Bertie Lacy, divested of wraps, was superbly out of keeping with the atmosphere, a creature of outdoors vividly alive. Her dark eyes flashed in a face brilliant rather than

delicate, an effect heightened by the shading of rouge and powder still remaining from the stage make-up.

"Margarita, Margarita," the tiny old lady summoned plaintively.

Philippa turned at once. "You are tired, dear? Shall I ring for Susan—would you like to go to bed?"

"Keep your aunt with us," urged the guest. "Surely she can be comfortable here on a couch or a chair. She does not appear tired; it is not late."

Philippa smiled consent.

"That is good of you, Miss Lacy, to guess she might be lonely. Indeed, she is usually with me. My mother's name was Margarita. She and my father were lost at sea when I was a child. Lately Aunt Rose has forgotten—she calls *me* Margarita. I have no other kin."

When they were seated at supper, Miss Lacy abruptly put another question. "Why did you ask me to come to your home?" she demanded.

Philippa looked with straight candor into the keen eyes opposite.

"To take care of you," she said simply.

"There were men in the box behind mine," she went on, as the other gasped in surprise. "They—one of them said he would bring you to a supper they had planned. He said you never did such things, but you would listen to him tonight because today was your birthday, and everyone who was not at home was lonely on his birthday. I was so sorry for you and so indignant that anyone should take such cruel advantage of a solitary girl—and I thought of asking you to come with me."

Bertie Lacy rose and walked to a window, turning her back to the room.

"And then I was lonely, also," Philippa presently added. "It is my birthday, too—my twenty-first. So we shall have a happy evening, together, shall we not?"

The guest came back to the table. "Yes, we'll have a happy evening, Miss Howard. I cannot thank you for your generosity—I can only wish I came with a better title into your house."

Perhaps the professional entertainer

never had lavished so much tact and art, so much gracefully concealed endeavor in amusing a great audience, as was now centered upon diverting this one girl. It was not done theatrically; nothing could have been more frank and natural than the next hour's merriment. Even Miss Fairfax was aroused to interest and listened.

The thin, sharp chime of a Swiss clock fell unexpectedly across a lull in the conversation.

"Midnight!" Philippa exclaimed, raising a slim finger. "Our birthday is ended."

"Midnight!" echoed Bertie Lacy, and stood up.

"You are not going—not yet?"

"I must; I have already stayed too long."

Philippa followed the other's retreat into the hall, impulsively eager to retain her guest.

"Please do not go tonight. Will you not stay with us? We should be so glad, Aunt Rose and I."

"It is not possible, Miss Howard."

"Why not? There is the telephone to notify any friends who might expect you. It is snowing and so cold. Consider"—Philippa dimpled into coaxing playfulness—"consider how proud I shall be of having entertained Bertie Lacy!"

"Miss Howard, you had a program at the theater—did you read how I am described there?"

"Certainly—'Bertie Lacy, the only Gibson Girl who isn't.' Isn't *what*?" The dark eyes laughed up to the searching blue ones. "Isn't like the others, I suppose. Because you are not, you know, like anyone else."

"That is all you saw?"

Bertie Lacy put on the heavy masculine coat and crossed the hall, opening the outer door. A rush of freezing air stormed in.

"Never again go to a theater where I am," the visitor steadily requested. "Never speak to anyone of me or of this visit. You have given me an evening I shall not forget, Miss Howard; give me this much more."

"Not see you again?" Philippa cried

out, dismayed. "But, you will come here?"

"No, never."

Philippa stood still, heedless of the increasing cold.

"I thought we could be friends," she regretted, proudly reserved. "You see, I liked you very much. But perhaps you do not like me. Thank you for tonight; you have been most good. Oh, you will wait while I send for the limousine, of course."

With a swift movement Bertie Lacy stepped back into the hall and caught the young girl's offered hand.

"The way I like you you'll never know. What I have felt tonight you'll never understand. I'm not of your world. Miss Howard, I hope God will send you the right one to do for you what Bertie Lacy would do and could do, and must not. Good night."

Dazed, uncomprehending, Philippa Howard remained in the bitter wind, gazing into the blank snow-filled darkness that had taken her guest.

"Margarita, Margarita!" called the plaintive old voice after a moment.

The girl started, shivering violently, and went to close the front door. She realized then that she was chilled to numbness.

Seven days had passed when an elderly gentleman called at Bertie Lacy's apartment one afternoon.

"I am Dr. Wilfred Strong," he announced, with some hesitation. He wore short gray side whiskers which he fingered uncertainly, eyeing his companion in doubt. "I have come on a delicate errand. Really, I hardly know how to say it. Did you—I mean were you—the guest of a young lady last Thursday evening, may I ask?"

Bertie Lacy gave a great start.

"I had that honor," was the slow reply, given after a brief pause.

"Ah—pardon me—under a misconception on the lady's part?"

"Yes."

The physician pursed his lips, but ventured no comment.

"The young lady has been ill," he stated, drily precise—"very ill. She

recalls standing a considerable time in an open doorway, wearing a light evening gown. The thermometer fell below zero that night, you will remember. The next day she developed pneumonia. Excluding mischance, she will recover; the worst is over. But I need not say how slight a thing may delay or ruin all—a fixed idea preying on the mind, the denial of a wish."

The two looked at each other across the sunny, bright-hued little room.

"She wants to see you," said Dr. Strong.

Bertie Lacy turned silently to the miniature hearth where blue gas flames curled monotonously around an imitation log. It was not a happy face that the physician watched, nor a tranquil one.

"I think," the doctor added, after awaiting a reply, "that she must see you. The hold that you have taken upon her imagination is, under the circumstances, uncanny. Having carried the affair so far, you have a duty—" His voice died away.

"I will go," said Bertie Lacy. "Now?"

"It would be advisable. Ah—she will expect to see you as you appeared to her before, of course."

"I will make ready. Will you have a taxicab at the door?"

"Miss Howard's automobile is below; I came in it. We can return together, if you like."

The room where Philippa Howard had fought out the battle whose victory was still so ill assured was a lofty, dull, handsome place, like all the interior of the house.

The distant sound of a closing door startled wide the patient's large, wistful dark eyes; steps on the stairs held her listening, intent. Her own door opened.

"Bertie Lacy!" rang the eager greeting. "Bertie—Lacy!"

Bertie Lacy crossed the room to take the transparent little hand offered.

"You are so much alive," Philippa panted happily. "I somehow thought I must get well if I saw you. You do not mind?"

"Do you not know that I would give everything I have to help you?"

"Yes, I know. Stay a little while."

There was a chair beside the bed. At the doctor's gesture, the visitor took that seat. Philippa lay quietly absorbing the companionship, her hand still resting in the firm, not small hand of the other. At another time she might have wondered that Bertie Lacy should come bareheaded and wearing the black satin gown of the theater, but now she saw only the color and vigor, the effect of youth and glowing health that was even more apparent than when it first enchanted her.

"You are going to grow strong, quite strong, and go South," Bertie Lacy said after a while, the low-pitched voice at once soothing and arousing.

"It is so far," wearily.

"But worth seeking. Listen, I will tell you."

It was the "great impersonator" who told her. The sober doctor and nurse listened also, fascinated. The walls of the dull room were down; all the glitter and allure of a Southern beach, the sapphire and silver places where people made playfellows of the days, all the call and appeal of life rose to summon the girl who had not lived. And she responded, slowly brightening.

"Yes, I would go there," she finally sighed. "Why not you, too?"

"No; I cannot. I must stay here with my work."

Philippa put out an unsteady hand, drawing the other closer.

"Listen, Bertie—I cannot say 'Miss Lacy,' now—bend your head so they will not hear us. Tell me, did you ever love anyone—I mean, as lovers do?"

Bertie Lacy regarded the colorless, delicate face set in clustering dark hair that overlay the pillow, and looked away.

"Yes," was the smothered reply.

"You know it, then, that wonderful thing! Since you were last here, I have had so much time to think, to wonder if ever I could feel so. Somehow you made me restless and changed me. You did not speak of such things, but you made me think of them. You will be married some day?"

"Never. The one I love does not and

must not care for me. To marry me would be ridiculous, would be social disaster. I am a paid plaything and cannot ask the world to consider me seriously."

The soft, weak fingers crept to touch the clenched hand.

"Poor Bertie! But if he loved you nothing could matter. I am only a girl, but nothing would matter to me. And surely you are too bitter; that is not so."

"It is so."

"Not for you! It is very easy to love you. Let me tell you a fancy of mine; I think, I am quite certain, that if ever I care for anyone, he will have eyes like yours, Bertie."

The exclamation that escaped the visitor was almost a cry of protest:

"Hush, hush! You must not tell me such things; I have no right to listen!"

The doctor came across the room, finger lifted warningly; the nurse stiffened in frigid disapproval. Bertie Lacy had risen, turning away from the young girl, but checked movement at sight of the rebuking two and stood still.

"What did I say?" Philippa questioned, too weak for great wonder. "Are you angry?"

"No, no," was the hurried assurance. "I beg your pardon; it was nothing. I must go."

"You will come again soon?"

"Forgive me; it is best that I should not."

Philippa's sensitive face clouded childishly.

"But I want you to come! If you do not, I shall not get well, I know."

Bertie Lacy looked from physician to patient, and submitted.

"Very well; I will come again. But not until you are quite strong. If you want to see me, get well."

"You promise?"

"Yes."

"You have talked enough, Miss Howard," interposed the doctor. "You must rest now."

Philippa moved her head in obedient resignation, still regarding her visitor.

"Bertie, kiss me good-bye."

Bertie Lacy drew back, suddenly pale.

"Miss Howard!"



"You—you do not want to?" Amazed pain flooded her dark eyes. "We are not friends then?"

"Yes—I—you do not understand."

"I understand; I have troubled you very much. I am sorry; please remember that I was very lonely. Good-bye."

She averted her grieved face resolutely, her lashes falling to aid concealment of feeling. Bertie Lacy uttered a sharp, inarticulate exclamation, then stooped almost with desperation and kissed her soft mouth, unconsciously gripping the hand she had extended.

"Get well," was the curt adjuration. "Only get well!"

The doctor overtook the departing guest at the door, but was given no opportunity for speech.

"If you let her send for me again before she is strong enough to hear the truth, I'll make you pay for it!" Bertie Lacy blazed out at him. "I won't come; I'll leave the city first. To drag her—*her*—"

"As for learning the truth, I think you have just shown it to her yourself," the doctor drily retorted. "And you began the matter."

"Oh, *I'm* paying in full! But this ends it, do you hear? Ends it!"

There was no further summons for Bertie Lacy. One month passed—two. Early in the spring the name of the "Great Impersonator" abruptly disappeared from programs and billboards.

"Bertie's gone in for headwork," someone said. "Writing a play. Bet he makes good! Bertie's always a winner."

But there are situations that refuse to be ignored. On the first of March a card was delivered at the home of Bertie Lacy.

MISS PHILIPPA FAIRFAX HOWARD

Thursday the second, at four

There lay so much behind that brief legend. Bertie Lacy knew it, and spent a white night before the little hearth where blue flames curled monotonously around the unconvincing imitation log. But the offered appointment was kept.

Philippa Howard knew that it would be kept. Perhaps she had had her white nights before writing to make it. A few minutes before the hour she was waiting alone in the massive drawing room. At four o'clock a servant parted the dull brocaded curtains and introduced the guest.

Bertie Lacy came halfway down the room and stopped, waiting in a silence submissive rather than expectant.

"Mr. Lacy," began the young girl—"Mr. Lacy—" and halted.

No less strongly agitated, he moved a step nearer.

"Since you have let me come, you will hear my defense before dismissing me," he appealed. "I am beyond pardon, I know, yet some excuse did exist. The second time was not all my fault; I saw no better way, and you were ill. The doctor could tell you so, if he would."

"He has. I understand that. It is the other time, the first." She bit her soft lip, steadying its quiver. "I was so stupid—no doubt you laughed."

"Laughed!" echoed Bertie Lacy. "Laughed!"

There was little outward resemblance between the Bertie Lacy of the stage and this keenly earnest man. But for one instant Philippa encountered the straight gaze of his unchanged gray eyes, and at once a hundred delicate bonds of former friendliness and confidence were renewed. She turned to a chair and sat down, clasping her hands in her lap.

"If you did not," she reproached unsteadily, "why did you let me go on? Why did you ever come to meet me, like that?"

He drew a quick breath.

"If you would believe I meant no wrong! Miss Howard, if you could believe that! When your note was brought to me that night at the theater, I thought it was sent in sport. One of my friends had been planning a masquerade dance, and I fancied your invitation was his jesting way of summoning me to it in costume. Instead of him, I found you."

"You could have told me then."

"On the crowded sidewalk, among

fifty people who would have reveled in repeating the story? I tried to draw back; you may remember I hesitated. If your aunt had not been with you, I should have refused. But I was afraid of humiliating you. I meant to speak in your car, but there, too, opportunity seemed to fail. You—I never had seen anyone like you. I thought of your mortification; perhaps I thought of my own and shrank from confessing myself a man in that farcical dress. You cannot know how wonderful you looked! And every instant it grew harder to speak."

She bent her small head still lower, looking down at her own clasped fingers. Lacy pushed back the heavy brown hair from his forehead and remained silent for a moment.

"When you said that you were lonely and dreaded closing your birthday alone," he resumed, his voice subdued, "I committed my great fault. Even then, in the first quarter-hour, your happiness seemed to me most important of all things. I determined not to tell you, but to give you that one evening of harmless gaiety and then to step out of your life and knowledge. How could I foresee what happened?"

"You will not pardon me!" Lacy exclaimed suddenly and passionately. "Very well, I will go. At least, I have hurt only myself; I can remember that. Your life will go on unchanged, since only your doctor knows of our meeting, and he must be silent. My life—I have left the stage; if any future success comes to me, it will come free from ridicule. In spite of all absurd disguise, you did like Bertie Lacy, Miss Howard. Given an equal chance with the men of your circle, I might have made our comedy a drama."

He turned and was at the door before she answered.

"Perhaps you have," murmured Philippa.

"You do not know," he protested. "Let me go before I lose honesty to you. I am not an actor or artist—I am a public plaything, a *farceur*. What can Bertie Lacy have to say to Miss Howard?"

Her self-possession strengthened as his failed.

"He doesn't tell me," she returned. "And—you *are* an artist, a great artist. You are not just."

"I think," he said, quietly and steadily, "that if I go now, I will be almost fit to have stayed. I love you; what little you feel for me is partly glamour of the footlights, partly pity. There will be someone else, someone very different from me—"

"Oh, no!" denied Philippa, quite innocently.

His composure crumpled abruptly and utterly. Quite unexpectedly they were in each other's arms.

"If you will wait two years—" Lacy surrendered incoherently. "It is wrong—I am wrong in letting you—I am selfish! But if you will wait two years, I will earn something, some fame or money or success. You have so much, my dear!"

"Two—years?"

"Is it too much to ask? Too long?"

As Lacy left the house he met Dr. Strong. As the two men recognized each other, a great scarlet touring car swung to a halt beside the curb and a chorus of jovial voices called greeting and invitation.

The door opened. Both men turned. Straight down to Lacy Philippa ran, her face brilliant.

"Bertie, dear!" she panted breathlessly, and clasped both hands over his arm, smiling up at him.

The witnesses were dumb, staring at the two in stunned amazement. Bertie Lacy went white, his comprehension reeling before the sweet treachery he alone could read. But before question could take form, he sharply recovered himself and took the only course.

"Philippa, out in this wind!" he reproached. He caught her hand. "Dr. Strong, you and my fiancée, Miss Howard, are old friends, of course." He bowed to the automobile party, then took Philippa indoors.

"I must tell you that I did not plan it," she cried—"I mean not at first. But the house was so empty when you went out—and two years seemed such a long time."

# MINISTERS OF GRACE\*

By J. Hartley Manners

## CHARACTERS

SIR PHILIP ARLINGCOURT, M.P. (*leader of the Opposition*)

RICHARD PYCROFT, M.P. (*his secretary*)

PAWLE (*a servant*)

CYNTHIA, LADY ARLINGCOURT

MRS. WREXBY

PLACE: *Sir Philip's house, Whitehall Gardens, London.*

TIME: *Evening—during a Parliamentary session.*

SCENE—*A library. There are doors at the back, and to the right windows opening out upon a balcony. A writing table to one side is strewn with papers—letters, Parliamentary reports and telegrams. The room is somberly and impressively furnished in oak, with portraits and tapestries on the walls and a well filled bookcase, and is dark save for the moonlight streaming in through the open windows. The sound of voices, laughter and subdued music floats in from the reception hall at the right.*

*The door at the left opens. SIR PHILIP ARLINGCOURT enters, closes the door carefully, then switches on the lights. He is in evening dress, and his manner conveys the characteristic of quiet strength. He turns on his reading lamp over the table and examines a letter.*

SIR PHILIP (*reading*)

"I am here tonight under the chaperonage of Lady Montagu. I will meet so many of my one-time friends. Yet the one I most want to see is at the House of Commons. I send this to him by messenger, wondering and hoping. A meeting tonight might save us both so much trouble.

"C. W."

*(He laughs softly to himself, sits, writes a few lines, then rings a bell. PAWLE enters and waits silently.)*

Mrs. Wrexby is here tonight.

PAWLE

Indeed, sir!

SIR PHILIP

I believe so, Pawle. Who was in attendance on Lady Arlingcourt's guests?

PAWLE

Phillips, sir.

SIR PHILIP (*giving him the note*)

Ask him to give that to Mrs. Wrexby—at once.

PAWLE

No answer, sir?

SIR PHILIP

No.

PAWLE

I see sir. *(He opens the door and waits.)* Mr. Pycroft, sir.

*(PYCROFT enters. PAWLE goes out.)*

\*Acting rights reserved.

## THE SMART SET

PYCROFT

I missed you in the House and followed you to the terrace, then to the hall. Brann told me you'd driven away immediately after your speech.

SIR PHILIP

I did.

PYCROFT

You must come back. We'll snatch a division at one. The whole thing was arranged in half an hour. We have a full attendance; messengers in hansoms are scouring the clubs for the few that are missing. The Government are thirty short; nine couldn't pair, eight down with influenza, three with gout, remainder neutral—won't vote. Marsham's speaking now; Grant'll follow for the Government—then come the Irish. At one we must all be in our places or within call. When it comes to Sir Evan Hampton's turn he'll drop out—the Speaker's chance to put the question. He'll declare for the Government—we'll challenge a division and squeeze through.

SIR PHILIP

You are a wonderful strategist, Pycroft.

PYCROFT

This Colonial bill is vital.

SIR PHILIP

A poor measure.

PYCROFT

John Birmingham says it's the finest thing the Government has brought in.

SIR PHILIP

In a desert of mediocrity it is indeed an oasis. Still a poor thing.

PYCROFT

Your speech tonight knocked the bottom out of it.

SIR PHILIP

Had I known that, I would have been more merciful.

PYCROFT

It was a great speech. I was proud to listen to it.

SIR PHILIP

I felt ashamed to speak it.

PYCROFT

The whole House was impressed.

SIR PHILIP

I was amused.

PYCROFT

You affect not to take politics seriously.

SIR PHILIP

Politics is marvelous, my dear Pycroft—the House of Commons impossible. If once we took it seriously its capacity for usefulness would be gone.

PYCROFT

Usefulness?

SIR PHILIP

I said capacity. Its usefulness is a beautiful legend we all cling to. Like the Buddhist's Nirvana, it is something we pray for and hope for and no human eye sees.

PYCROFT

I wish you wouldn't talk like that. I often wonder why you ever entered politics.

SIR PHILIP

Because fiction has always fascinated me. I was brought up on House of Commons speeches and Grimm's fairy tales, and I have never been able to dissociate them. The one dealt in giants, the other in pigmies, and all were one. Politics used to be a profession—now it is a business. It used to have dignity—now it has only impudence.

PYCROFT

That is the fault of the country.

SIR PHILIP

It is the fault of the language. The Greeks had orators; the Commons has—agitators. It is the modern Babel in which everyone speaks his own tongue and the world stands amazed and listens. My dear Pycroft, believe me, the secret of success, the secret of government, is silence. All great things are done in silence. In silence are we born; in silence we die. It should be the only tongue we listen to. It speaks to us with a clarion voice.

PYCROFT

You speak of silence after breaking up the Government's best bill in a three hours' speech! I don't understand you at all.

SIR PHILIP

I am glad you said that, Pycroft. If once people understood me, I should lose touch with myself and my party. People always follow what they don't understand.

PYCROFT

Suppose we beat the Government to-night!

SIR PHILIP

It is a beautiful supposition. It is like food to a beggar.

PYCROFT

Suppose we go to the country and win! Suppose we return in power with you as our leader—leader of the House of Commons—leader of this great empire!

SIR PHILIP

Pycroft, you are not addressing the House.

PYCROFT

Doesn't it fire your blood?

SIR PHILIP

To lead twenty men against a hundred and to destroy them for one's country would make the blood run riot, the pulse beat like a hammer. To lead three hundred and sixty men—mostly fools—in and out of lobbies in and out of years—brr'h!

PYCROFT (*impatiently*)

Sir Philip, you agree, I suppose, that it is well to beat the Government to-night?

SIR PHILIP

All things that are bad should be beaten.

PYCROFT (*buttoning up his coat*)

Very well. We *must* win.

SIR PHILIP

We must.

(PYCROFT *taking up his hat*)

Tonight!

SIR PHILIP

Tonight.

PYCROFT

Then come. (*Looking at his watch*) It is nearly twelve. Your clock is five minutes fast. We must run no risks. It is a serious crisis. Better come with me.

SIR PHILIP

I have serious business in hand.

PYCROFT

What can be more serious than one's country?

SIR PHILIP

One's soul. I gave mine once into a man's hands; he shared it with a woman. Tonight I am going to buy it back.

PYCROFT

But—

SIR PHILIP

At twelve o'clock I buy it back. My poor Pycroft, you don't understand these things. You are only concerned with pairs and divisions and lobbies and bills—dreams! I am concerned with the most vital thing to a man. To be a leader one must have a soul—I will bring mine to Westminster in a little while.

(PYCROFT *turns abruptly to the door.*)

Forgive me—there is something I love in you. Best and truest of friends, look at me. If you could see into my heart you would feel that to know me you must judge me silent. Speech to us all is a cloak, something we are given to wrap ourselves in. We snatch at words to hide our inmost selves.

PYCROFT (*looking intently at him*)

You are in trouble?

SIR PHILIP

An intangible, ungraspable trouble. Something that may disappear almost as one sees it—something that may bring a curtain down upon my career. Some day I will tell you. A danger past is a smoking room jest, a drawing room story, a lover's advocate. Let mine pass—or let me sink and disappear under it.

PYCROFT

I don't like this. It has upset me. I wish I could help you.

## THE SMART SET

SIR PHILIP

No one can help me. It will be a duel. I may win—I may lose; who knows?

PYCROFT

At any rate, I can count on your attendance tonight?

SIR PHILIP

Yes—you can rely on that. The greatest things in life take the least time. I shall be with you at one.

(*Shaking hands, they stand a moment in silence. CYNTHIA enters.*)

CYNTHIA (*advancing, then seeing PYCROFT*)

Oh! I didn't know you were here, Mr. Pycroft. How are you? Talking politics?

PYCROFT

I am just going.

CYNTHIA

Don't let me drive you away.

SIR PHILIP

His country calls him.

CYNTHIA (*to PYCROFT*)

Can't your country spare you a little longer? Many of your friends are here.

PYCROFT

Thank you. I am wanted at the House.

CYNTHIA

I'm sorry. A public man has little time for recreation, I suppose.

PYCROFT (*to SIR PHILIP as he goes to the door*)

As soon as you can—mind.

SIR PHILIP

Never fear—I won't be late. Put Birmingham up if things drag; he always says the wrong thing—invaluable in a crisis like this. If words fail him—O'Gorman, I think. He'll bring in Egypt and bimetallism and confuse the real issues—always a wise thing. *Au revoir*, my dear Pycroft. Take the carriage.

PYCROFT

My cab is waiting.

SIR PHILIP

The future of England depends on a hansom! It is a great risk. (*PYCROFT goes out.*)

Happy is the man who can say of him: "He is my friend."

CYNTHIA

Then you are happy.

SIR PHILIP

Thrice happy, since I, too, and I only, can say: "She is my wife." (*He kisses her hair.*)

CYNTHIA (*taking his hand*)

How pale you are! Your hand is as cold as ice. You are shivering!

SIR PHILIP (*putting his arm around her*)

You are trembling, too.

CYNTHIA

Because I have been married to the strangest, wisest, cleverest man in England for two months, and I have not yet grown accustomed to the responsibility.

SIR PHILIP

One should never grow accustomed to responsibilities; then they lose their value. But your guests—have they gone?

CYNTHIA

Only the Parliamentary ones. Something is afoot tonight. They have all been sent for. Everyone inquired for you; their disappointment was terrible.

SIR PHILIP

I am charmed to hear it. It increases one's valuation.

CYNTHIA

I have only the glory of reflection.

SIR PHILIP

A mirror is the most worshiped object in the world.

CYNTHIA

I stole from the room when I heard you had come back.

SIR PHILIP

How did you hear?

CYNTHIA

Pawle gave Phillips some message from you. I questioned him. He told me you were here.

SIR PHILIP

No one else knows?

CYNTHIA

No one. I thought you would be late.

SIR PHILIP

I—I—had forgotten some—papers. I am returning at once.

CYNTHIA

Give me a moment, will you? I want your advice. Something has happened tonight that has distressed me exceedingly.

SIR PHILIP

Indeed!

CYNTHIA

Lady Montagu asked my permission to bring someone with her tonight. She said I would be doing a kind action in receiving her; she particularly wished me to.

SIR PHILIP

Yes?

CYNTHIA

Trusting implicitly in Lady Montagu, I consented. She came. In a moment I recognized—Mrs. Wrexby.

SIR PHILIP (*with a quick gesture, but controlling himself*)

Mrs. Wrexby!

CYNTHIA (*looking at him*)

You know her?

SIR PHILIP

One meets many people, Cynthia.

CYNTHIA

But you remember—the scandal two years ago?

SIR PHILIP

The world is full of scandals, Cynthia.

CYNTHIA

But you must remember this particular one. It was town talk. You must have seen it in the papers. Charles Wrexby divorced her twelve months after her marriage.

SIR PHILIP

How impetuous!

CYNTHIA

I at once went to Lady Montagu. I upbraided her. She told me Mrs. Wrexby was innocent, had suffered terribly, unjustly, and that she was doing her best to reinstate her in society—she was sure I would help her.

SIR PHILIP

Will you?

CYNTHIA

I absolutely declined. Think what this means! The Traceys spoke most strongly to me, the Turners as well. Everyone looked amazed—no one spoke to her.

SIR PHILIP

Has she gone?

CYNTHIA

No, she rose to go a few minutes ago; then Phillips brought her a note. She read it and sat down again. What am I to do?

SIR PHILIP

It is a delicate matter.

CYNTHIA

One thing—she must never enter this house again.

SIR PHILIP

Lady Montagu is an old friend of mine—of my mother's. She is the sweetest, kindest woman that ever breathed. Don't hurt her, Cynthia. If she thinks this woman innocent, worthy of being championed, there must be some reason—some really good reason.

CYNTHIA

But she was divorced on her husband's petition—and with his own friend.

SIR PHILIP

The action was undefended.

CYNTHIA (*amazed*)

Undefended?

SIR PHILIP

The case went by default.

CYNTHIA

A moment ago you said you knew nothing about it.



SIR PHILIP

It has come back to me. I recall it now perfectly.

CYNTHIA

Had she been innocent she would have fought it.

SIR PHILIP

And had she not been tied for life to a man she hated?

CYNTHIA

Charles Wrexby! One of the most charming men I ever met.

SIR PHILIP

In a ballroom. Her acquaintance was more intimate.

CYNTHIA

Why, you are absolutely defending her!

SIR PHILIP (*quietly*)

I think it probable Lady Montagu is right.

CYNTHIA

Then you suggest that I—I should receive her?

SIR PHILIP

It would be a kindly action from one woman to another.

CYNTHIA

But, Philip, you can't seriously wish me to—to— Oh, Philip!

SIR PHILIP

Why not? It is a very little thing. Besides, you will have all the credit of a discoverer—and all the inward satisfaction of a society missionary.

CYNTHIA

I don't want to be a society missionary.

SIR PHILIP

Very well. Do as you wish. Now, please—time presses.

CYNTHIA

Philip, you think me hard, cruel! You are angry with me!

SIR PHILIP

Not angry—a little disappointed.

CYNTHIA (*going to him*)

I will be guided by you. I will do what you wish.

SIR PHILIP

I am glad. Now go back to your guests. Go straight to Lady Montagu—

thank her for the opportunity of assisting her in doing a kindly act—in stretching out a hand to a soul struggling to reach firm land. Do this; you will not regret it. Never mind what people say. You stand alone in your beauty and goodness—no one dares to assail that. Give some of that purity and grace to this poor social outcast—outcast perchance, as so many women are today, through no fault of their own.

CYNTHIA

How serious you are!

SIR PHILIP

Two things always make me serious—women and politics. They are rarely understood. Men take them up as a pastime and find them deadly earnest.

CYNTHIA

I was deadly earnest in my indignation a moment ago.

SIR PHILIP

And now in your sympathy?

CYNTHIA

Yes. Forgive me for my harshness.

SIR PHILIP

Those who have never been tempted are always the most cruel.

CYNTHIA (*paling*)

Hush! You mustn't say that.

SIR PHILIP

Your life was like a sheet of white paper until I wrote on it—"wife."

CYNTHIA

Oh, husband, husband, if you but knew me!

SIR PHILIP (*taking her in his arms*)

I do know you—through and through—thought and feeling—every beat of your heart.

CYNTHIA

Oh, why do you love me so blindly?

SIR PHILIP

I love you because I see.

CYNTHIA

If some day you saw things you have never dreamed of?

SIR PHILIP

Because they were yours, they would be sacred to me.

CYNTHIA

Philip! (*She shows an impulse to say something that is uppermost in her mind—it struggles for expression. The clock strikes twelve.*)

SIR PHILIP (*anxiously*)

Go back to your guests. They will miss you.

CYNTHIA

And you?

SIR PHILIP

In a few moments I return to the House of Commons. This will be an eventful night—before morning a new era may have dawned on England. (*He kisses her.*) Good night.

(*She goes out. He looks after her a moment, then makes a gesture of resignation, puts some papers away in a drawer and lights a cigar. A knock is heard. He turns the key in the door lock and then opens the window looking out on the balcony. MRS. WREXBY steps into the room.*)

MRS. WREXBY

So eloquent a compliment is worthy of you, Sir Philip. Joys that are unspoken one feels the deepest. Yours at seeing me again is apparently too deep for expression.

SIR PHILIP

I am waiting.

MRS. WREXBY

For me? How unlike you! Well, I have had a most boring evening. Lady Arlingcourt is an angelic wife, but as a hostess—if I may say so—so forgetful. How soon one is forgotten! Two years ago everyone knew me; tonight no one remembered me. What it is to have been married! It is like burying oneself.

SIR PHILIP

Two years ago rumor and the society papers *did* bury you, for three consecutive weeks.

MRS. WREXBY

Absurd, wasn't it? You see I am not dead, only divorced. The same thing, apparently, if my reception tonight were

a criterion—as it happens it is not. I have always believed in the resurrection of the dead—even the socially dead. This is an age of miracles. A miracle is going to happen in my case.

SIR PHILIP

Indeed!

MRS. WREXBY

I am going to be resurrected. Doors are to open to me again, smiles are to welcome me, cavaliers escort me in the Row, stand beside my carriage in the Park. Park Lane and Grosvenor Place will yawn for me, the terrace of the House of Commons become familiar again with my figure, my gowns. My little *salon* in Mountwill Street become once again the haunt of the brilliant and the fascinating. How delightful it will be, won't it?

SIR PHILIP

Perfectly.

MRS. WREXBY

And you wonder how I am going to do it?

SIR PHILIP

With you, Mrs. Wrexby, I never wonder at anything. (*With a quick gesture*) You will be missed.

MRS. WREXBY

I think not. I am on the balcony taking the air. Your wife came in through the door as I left by the window.

SIR PHILIP (*looking at his watch*)

I can give you just six minutes.

MRS. WREXBY

It took six days to make the world; can a woman's reputation be remade in six minutes?

SIR PHILIP

As you said, it is an age of miracles.

MRS. WREXBY

And you are going to perform one? Remember, I believe in you—in your power to undo mischief, to right wrong; to give back to an unhappy woman her happiness, to bring her to life, back again to the world she loves—back to the man she loves!

SIR PHILIP (*apprehensively*)

What do you mean?

MRS. WREXBY

Back to the man whom years ago you took from me—the man who has waited and watched for me—who waits now—to make me his wife.

SIR PHILIP (*recoiling*)

No, no!

MRS. WREXBY

You see, there *is* faith in this little world. He believed in me three years ago when you stood between us. He believed in me when circumstances forced me to the altar with a man I loathed; he believed in me when my husband broke the fetters that bound us. That is faith, Sir Philip. He offers now to marry the socially dead woman. But before that can be I must be put back again where I was when he first knew me. You must do that. It was your hand that condemned me—yours must be the hand to redeem me. This house must be open to me; your wife must welcome me. You must insist on my innocence, force your friends to accept it—and to accept me. Lastly, you must wish your cousin Neville joy and happiness the day he marries me.

SIR PHILIP

All that lies in my power socially shall be done for you, Mrs. Wrexby, because I believe you to be innocent. But there I stop.

MRS. WREXBY

No, there you begin. You must undo the wrong you did me three years ago, when you stood between me and your cousin Neville.

SIR PHILIP

It was for his sake. He was dear to me.

MRS. WREXBY

And he was dear to *me*. Why should you constitute yourself judge between us? What has your interference done? Driven me into an unhappy marriage, made him a drunken waster—his commission resigned—his position lost—his career thrown away. How dare you interfere—you of all people?

SIR PHILIP

I was responsible for him. I loved him. You were not the wife for that

bright young boy. And you must not try to enter his life again.

MRS. WREXBY

I have entered it.

SIR PHILIP

I forbid you.

MRS. WREXBY

You forbid me? (*She laughs unpleasantly.*) 'Tis a dangerous thing to play with souls. Two souls stand to your account. They are on the verge—if they are lost it is your doing.

SIR PHILIP

Ask me anything else you wish. But marry my cousin Neville you shall not—as long as I can prevent it.

MRS. WREXBY

Now listen to me. Tonight your *coup* is arranged; the Government is to be beaten. Oh, I have heard of it. You will become the hero of the hour—of the country—a popular idol. A word from me can shatter that idol—show it to be the clay of which rogues are made. (*SIR PHILIP makes a movement to stop her.*) Yes, rogues. Unless I have your absolute promise to aid this marriage that word will be spoken, and Sir Philip Arlingcourt will be known in his true colors as a political adventurer.

SIR PHILIP

Hush! Hush!

MRS. WREXBY

In my possession is an agreement between you and the late leader of the Independent party, by which you paid him liberally for his support—while all the time you worked diametrically against his party. Unless I have your written authority giving your cousin Neville full control over his own estate *now*—unless you carry out your promise of restitution of my position—unless you consent to our marriage—that agreement shall go tonight to Printing House Square, and side by side with your eloquent speech will appear as disgraceful a compact as was ever entered into by an honorable Member of Parliament.

*(He stands looking at her a moment very white—somewhat irresolute; recovering himself, he looks at his cigar, which is out.)*

SIR PHILIP

No such agreement ever existed; it is a pure fiction.

MRS. WREXBY

Your composure is admirable. I congratulate you. Unfortunately the agreement bears your signature.

SIR PHILIP *(coldly)*

A forgery. Be careful how you resort to such devices, Mrs. Wrexby. You may renew the acquaintance of His Majesty's judges—this time not a divorce. I am amazed that so clever a woman should show so little imagination.

MRS. WREXBY

I have always marveled how so brilliant a man as Sir Philip Arlingcourt could have acted so stupidly.

SIR PHILIP

I am more than sorry for you, Mrs. Wrexby.

MRS. WREXBY

The emotion is distinctly creditable to you, Sir Philip.

SIR PHILIP

And perhaps—on reflection—I may have acted a little—a *little* unjustly toward you. And that the infatuation of my unfortunate young cousin should have stood the test of time comes as a surprise to me. Such an apparently extraordinary and genuine passion is quite unusual and therefore deserves some recognition. I have no wish to stand in the way of the boy's happiness. If you see in a marriage with him the potentiality of happiness—I confess I do not—marry by all means.

MRS. WREXBY

I am sure we will make each other devotedly happy.

SIR PHILIP

Marriage entails many responsibilities; my political career makes many demands on my time. I will give my solicitors instructions that on the day

you marry him Neville may assume control of his estate at once—instead of at twenty-five, as I had hitherto intended.

MRS. WREXBY

I am sure he will be most charmingly grateful.

SIR PHILIP

With regard to the unguarded statement you made just now—

MRS. WREXBY

Unguarded—and, I am sure, quite inaccurate.

SIR PHILIP

Such a document as you refer to—fictitious though it be—is altogether dangerous; and for the mere purpose of honesty and justice—

MRS. WREXBY

Would be safer in your possession?

SIR PHILIP

Exactly.

MRS. WREXBY

It shall be. I brought it for that purpose. But would it not be well to set down your promises in writing? Accidents do happen.

SIR PHILIP

That is true. Life is uncertain. If by my death I were to discount my cousin's happiness—it would be a matter for regret. *(He sits and writes.)* I will here set down my wishes respecting the property—and your marriage—and for the safer custody of the document I will leave it in your care.

MRS. WREXBY

And I shall have much pleasure in giving you this purely fictitious document in its place.

*(He holds out the paper to her; she extends a blue document. Before they can make the exchange, the handle of the door is turned, then shaken—then someone knocks at the door. She hides the paper instinctively and runs to the window; he motions to her to stand still and not to go out.)*

SIR PHILIP

Who is there?

PAWLE (*outside*)

A telephone message has just come from Mr. Pycroft, sir.

SIR PHILIP (*with a look of relief*)  
What is it? (*He unlocks the door.*)

PAWLE (*still outside*)

He says, will you be good enough to be in your seat by one thirty at the latest?

SIR PHILIP  
Thank you. Anything else?

PAWLE

Two telegrams and a letter brought by a messenger.

SIR PHILIP (*opening the door and taking them*)

Wait a minute—they may want answering.

(*He tears the telegrams open, glances at them, goes to the table and scribbles a line on a reply form. He opens the letter; a packet falls out; he looks at it hurriedly, goes to the door and gives PAWLE a paper.*)

Have this sent. I am not to be disturbed again. If any further message comes, write it down and leave it in the hall. And wait up until I go.

PAWLE

Yes, sir. (*He goes out.* SIR PHILIP *closes the door and locks it, walks to the table perplexedly and reads the letter, then examines the packet.*)

MRS. WREXBY (*again holding out the blue document*)

Shall we make the exchange?

SIR PHILIP  
Not now, Mrs. Wrexby.

MRS. WREXBY (*with a sudden fear*)  
What do you mean?

SIR PHILIP

You are at perfect liberty to send that—*forgery*—to any paper you please. If you do so I will be compelled to show some letters from you to the late Mr. Bardsley, the labor leader whom you say I bribed, showing clearly the relations that existed between you. I shall be compelled to make public how you came

to me and endeavored to extort promises from me on the strength of that forgery.

MRS. WREXBY (*trying to laugh*)  
So you are trying to frighten me, are you?

SIR PHILIP

Not at all. To teach you a little lesson. In a moment of weakness I was nearly tempted to treat with you. Thanks to my friend Mr. Pycroft—who was with poor Mr. Bardsley when he died, and who had his entire confidence—I am in a position to decline absolutely to have anything to do with you.

MRS. WREXBY

Mr. Pycroft?

SIR PHILIP

He happened to see you in the reception hall on the way out from this room, and guessing your errand, has kindly sent me this little packet. Now, Mrs. Wrexby, we must part company, and I regret I shall be unable in any way to help you. (*He unlocks the door of a recess in the table and takes out a red morocco letter box.*) I am sure you are far too discreet ever to risk these being made public. (*He deposits the packet of letters in the box, locks it, and withdraws the key.*)

MRS. WREXBY *has been glancing round like some trapped animal. As he withdraws the keys, with a cry she half falls. He drops the keys on the floor, catches her and supports her to a chair, then goes quickly to the cabinet for a glass. She opens her eyes and her hand steals along the table and secures the keys he has thrown down. He holds the glass of water to her lips; she appears to recover, then with a little cry of despair rises to her feet and totters up to the window. A tap is heard on the outside of the window; with a smothered cry of fear she turns to SIR PHILIP.*)

CYNTHIA (*outside*)

Philip! Philip!

(*With a quick movement MRS. WREXBY gets to one side so that anyone coming in and going out would not see her. SIR PHILIP stands petrified by the writing table. CYNTHIA pushes; the window gives to her touch and she enters.*)

I thought it was locked! I have seen Lady Montagu, dear, and made it quite all right. Mrs. Wrexby may come here as often as she pleases. (*She hears the rustling of Mrs. WREXBY's dress as she moves to the window. She turns; the women's eyes meet.*) You!

MRS. WREXBY (*in her subtlest manner*)  
How charming of you, dear Lady Arlingcourt! I hope to be quite a constant visitor. Your husband has been most considerate. I have been asking his advice and assistance. He seems to have a little hesitation in granting them—but I think he will in the end—especially now that I have such a friend in you. Good night, dear Lady Arlingcourt. Good night, Sir Philip.

(*She bows mockingly and goes out by way of the balcony.*)

CYNTHIA  
What was that woman doing here?

SIR PHILIP  
She came, as she said, to ask my advice and assistance.

CYNTHIA  
Here in your room—alone?

SIR PHILIP  
Yes, I sent for her.

CYNTHIA  
Sent for her? You know her intimately, then?

SIR PHILIP  
She was engaged to my cousin Neville three years ago. For family reasons I was compelled to interfere. She wishes now to renew the intimacy. I declined to sanction it.

CYNTHIA  
But—you say—you sent for her?

SIR PHILIP  
It was wiser to see her alone. No one saw her enter.

CYNTHIA  
But your message to her? That was the note I saw Phillips hand her?

SIR PHILIP  
Yes.

CYNTHIA  
You had actually sent it before—before I came to you here a few moments ago?

SIR PHILIP  
Yes.

CYNTHIA  
Yet you did not tell me.

SIR PHILIP  
I had good reasons.

CYNTHIA  
What are they?

SIR PHILIP  
I will tell you—tomorrow.

CYNTHIA  
You must tell me now! How can I live tonight through this horrible doubt hanging over me? Why should she come here—here of all places—to compromise you, to compromise me? Philip—you are keeping something from me!

SIR PHILIP  
I am keeping something from you you had far better not know. Now be guided by me; ask me no more—now.

CYNTHIA  
I must know before you leave this room. I have trusted in you, believed in you. The world is slipping from me. You whom no word, no doubt has ever touched! Explain this hideous tangle. A divorced woman whose name is a by-word here alone with you at dead of night and the house full of guests—what does it mean? And a few moments before you were pleading for her in the name of our love. Our love! It is a mockery! Speak! Explain!

SIR PHILIP  
Take care; you don't know what it is you ask. I tell you that woman is no more to me than a weed in the garden.

CYNTHIA  
Then what hold has she upon you?

SIR PHILIP  
None—now.

CYNTHIA  
Ah! Then she had once?

SIR PHILIP

Yes, but it is past. Cynthia, for your own sake, for my sake, ask me no more.

CYNTHIA

Then you have been guilty of something you have hidden from me!

SIR PHILIP

There are some things, Cynthia, that admit of no explanation. This is one. If you think our meeting here a guilty one, you wrong yourself in thinking it. If you think the indiscretion of many years ago, for which I am suffering now in your anger and doubt, injured *you* in any way, then you wrong me. She came here—because—

CYNTHIA (*now thoroughly aroused*)

Ah! You can explain *now!* You have had time to think of your explanation. I will save you the trouble of telling it.

SIR PHILIP

Cynthia, listen!

CYNTHIA

No. Go to the House with that lie on your tongue and in your heart. You have raised a barrier between us that nothing can break down. You have by your own act killed the love that was within me.

SIR PHILIP (*coldly*)

You mean that?

CYNTHIA

Yes!

SIR PHILIP

All right. Until you yourself come to me and tell me that your doubts and jealousies are as cruel as they are without foundation, that barrier will remain!

(*The clock chimes. He looks at it and goes out. The outer door is shut noisily. CYNTHIA stands a moment. Tears spring into her eyes. Then she moves unsteadily to the door. Suddenly MRS. WREXBY appears on the balcony and looks into the room. Not seeing anyone, she comes down to the table, keys in hand, unlocks the little door, takes out the red morocco case, unlocks it, opens it, finds the packet and laughs quietly to herself. CYNTHIA*

*turns and the two women confront each other.*)

CYNTHIA

You thief!

MRS. WREXBY

Thief? One cannot steal what is one's own?

CYNTHIA

Give me that packet.

MRS. WREXBY

My dear Lady Arlingcourt, that is quite impossible. They are much too precious. Love letters should only be read by one person—two at the most. Three would make them like trade circulars.

CYNTHIA

Love letters! In my husband's drawer?

MRS. WREXBY

He was taking care of them for me. Sweet of him, wasn't it?

CYNTHIA

I don't believe you. Give me that packet!

MRS. WREXBY

Oh, I couldn't! It wouldn't be delicate. Besides, I've forgotten what I wrote in them. (*Picking out one*) You may read one if you're very curious.

CYNTHIA (*going quickly to the bell*)

If you don't instantly give me that packet, together with an explanation of your presence here, I will ring for the servants.

MRS. WREXBY

That would be dreadful—dreadful for everyone, wouldn't it? It would look horrid in the papers. "Scandal in the future Prime Minister's house. At a late hour last evening—"

CYNTHIA

Give them to me!

MRS. WREXBY

Just read the address and the signature. The rest is quite unnecessary and not quite—proper. (*She holds them out.*)

CYNTHIA (*looking at the first envelope*)  
"Henry Bardsley, Esq."



MRS. WREXBY

Oh, you wouldn't know him. Sir Philip did—intimately. Member of Parliament—died suddenly—failure of something—his heart or his bank, I'm not quite sure which. Well, are you satisfied?

CYNTHIA

No. Why are you here?

MRS. WREXBY

I particularly wanted these letters. Sir Philip showed me where he had put them, and so I—I—took them. Now will you kindly give them back to me?

CYNTHIA

Not without my husband's permission.

MRS. WREXBY

You don't know what you are doing. If you don't give them to me, I shall be compelled to take extreme measures.

CYNTHIA

You can do anything you choose except stay in this house, or ever enter it again.

MRS. WREXBY

If my extreme measures involve your husband's honor?

CYNTHIA

Sir Philip's honor is in his own hands.

MRS. WREXBY

It was once. But he parted with it. Five years ago he entered into some foolish compact—with Mr.—with the leader of a party. He benefited in some way and became very successful. It was kept wonderfully quiet. Only two people knew it—the man with whom he made it—and that man's friend—me!

CYNTHIA

Then you came here to threaten my husband? And I suspected him! And through you! *(She laughs in an emotion of relief.)* Oh, what a poor blind fool I was to think you—you—could ever have been anything to him!

MRS. WREXBY

My letters.

CYNTHIA

I shall not part with them without my husband's permission. Do anything you choose—tell any lie you choose. Go! You—adventuress!

MRS. WREXBY *(with sudden fury)*

Oh! You dare to call me that! What are you? Is there no page in your life your honorable husband has never seen? You are worthy of each other, you two! The false minister—the impure wife!

CYNTHIA

Stop!

MRS. WREXBY

You know his history—I have opened your eyes. His shall be opened, too.

CYNTHIA

No, no!

MRS. WREXBY

Keep them. *(Indicating the packet)* Give them to your husband! Tell him you know him for what he is; to-morrow he shall know you for what you are! *(She turns to the window.)*

CYNTHIA *(faintly)*

Wait! *(MRS. WREXBY turns around; CYNTHIA extends the packet to her.)* Go out of our lives. Go—go quickly!

MRS. WREXBY *(taking the packet)*

You will say nothing of this to your husband?

CYNTHIA

Nothing—go!

*(Enter SIR PHILIP quickly in hat and cloak. He stops as he sees the two women. MRS. WREXBY has had no time to escape.)*

MRS. WREXBY

Ah, Sir Philip, Lady Arlingcourt and I have been having such a charming little talk. We quite understand each other now.

SIR PHILIP

Indeed!

MRS. WREXBY

I must go now. Lady Montagu will be impatient.

CYNTHIA *(in whom a struggle has been going on)*

You shall not go. Philip, that woman

## THE SMART SET

is a thief. She came here to steal something—I found her in the act.

SIR PHILIP

To steal something?

CYNTHIA

Yes—a packet of letters. They were in your case. She has them now.

MRS. WREXBY (*to CYNTHIA*)

You know what this will mean to you?

CYNTHIA (*throwing herself at her husband's feet*)

She made a bargain with me—unless I permitted her to go, she would tell you of something in my life you have never known. Before I knew you—I knew another—I thought I loved him. I did not know then what love meant. I didn't know how easy it is to lose one's name—

SIR PHILIP

Cynthia!

CYNTHIA

She knew of it and bargained with me. She has some hold on you—in some way

connected with those letters. Get them back—I want to save you. Do with me what you will; you must save yourself!

SIR PHILIP

Cynthia—Cynthia—what have you told me?

CYNTHIA

I have deceived you. I agreed to the bargain to shield myself. It is only now I see that you are all the world to me—

SIR PHILIP

I have never known you—nor you me. We have been living together, calling each other husband and wife, but all the while—strangers.

CYNTHIA

Strangers no longer!

SIR PHILIP

No—God help us—no! (*He takes her in his arms. MRS. WREXBY looks at them a moment, then lays her package of letters on the table and goes out silently.*)

CURTAIN



## THE POET

By J. J. O'Connell

AN idle dreamer, living in the past,  
He seems to you who know not how to look;  
And yet into the future, vague and vast,  
He sees as though it were an open book.



MANY a woman who claims to be clothed in righteousness wears it so décolleté that it barely hides her worldliness.



THE man who is constantly parading his upright character usually becomes a downright nuisance.

# LE VAUTOUR

Par Marc Donat

**E**DME FORGEOT était, de son métier, empaillleur-naturaliste. Il avait une petite boutique dans un des coins les plus reculés du Quartier Latin, au bas d'une vieille maison vermoulue et qui se présentait de guingois, comme ivre de crasse et de siècles.

Sur le fronton de la boutique on lisait ce mot bizarre :

EMPAILL . . .

Le reste avait été dévoré par la boue acide de Paris. Sur la porte, par exemple, les nom et prénom du commerçant s'étaient, suivis de cette orgueilleuse mention : "Médaille d'or aux Expositions."

Edme Forgeot était un petit homme actif et chauve, rasé comme un acteur, portant lunettes et qui se targuait de belles-lettres. Il vivait seul, n'employant qu'un aide auquel il avait recours le moins souvent possible, et il habitait, au-dessus de son magasin, trois pièces sordides, humides comme des caves et qui fleuraient le mois. Jadis, il avait empaillé des pièces superbes dont il avait encore quelques échantillons. Maintenant, il ne gardait plus guère, comme clientèle, que des braves femmes du quartier qui venaient, les larmes aux yeux, faire empailler Doucette ou Kiki.

M. Forgeot était considéré par ses voisins, comme un maniaque. On lui reprochait d'être peu liant et aussi d'avoir d'étranges yeux fuyants sous les lunettes dont il les garantissait. On lui reprochait aussi de ne jamais sortir en grande tenue le dimanche, de n'avoir ni parents ni amis. Il se cuisinait lui-même, dans un coin de l'arrière-boutique, des mets hâtifs, œufs sur le plat et bifteck qu'il mangeait seul, afin de retourner plus vite à son travail. Il

aimait ce travail comme les artisans de jadis chérissaient le leur. Nul n'excellait comme lui à donner l'attitude de la vie aux bêtes qu'il empaillait, et l'on était d'accord qu'il aurait fait une grosse fortune s'il avait consenti à quitter son trou à rats pour s'établir dans un beau quartier.

Mais Edme Forgeot tenait à sa vieille rue, à sa vieille boutique et à son vieil appartement. Quand il allait chercher ses provisions chez le crémier et chez le boucher, il clignait des yeux comme un animal nocturne effarouché par le soleil, et il se montrait assez mauvais commerçant, refusant de livrer, même à poids d'or, des pièces auxquelles il tenait, d'adorables papillons surtout, qu'il recevait de tous les coins du monde et dont il s'entourait pour se réjouir de leur splendeur, pour que son coin obscur fût illuminé par le rayonnement de leurs ailes.

Or, une nuit, il lui sembla entendre du bruit dans sa boutique. Il avait posé un timbre avertisseur qui devait sonner au cas où des cambrieurs auraient essayé de fracturer la porte. Le timbre resta muet, mais en tendant l'oreille, au milieu du grand silence, il entendit comme un chuchotement léger, un imperceptible bruit de petits pas pressés. M. Forgeot passa son pantalon, prit son revolver et descendit. Rien. Il remonta se coucher, pensant que dans ces maisons vétustes les craquements et les bruits singuliers n'étaient pas faits pour étonner. Tout de même, il eut le cauchemar. Un mois passa; au bout de ce mois, M. Forgeot fut de nouveau éveillé, au milieu de la nuit, par une sorte de tumulte étouffé qui venait de la boutique : "Voyons, se dit-il, vais-je

avoir des hallucinations, maintenant?" Il essaya de se contraindre au sommeil, n'y parvint point, descendit, fit sa ronde, ne vit rien de particulier et remonta. Le lendemain, les bruits recommençaient. Alors, le naturaliste, désireux d'en avoir le cœur net résolut de coucher, la nuit suivante, dans son magasin, sur un matelas.

Le lendemain, les volets fermés, il s'installa au beau milieu, se déshabilla, se coucha et éteignit la lampe, non sans avoir lu quelques pages d'un vieux bouquin, comme il faisait chaque soir. Jusqu'à onze heures et demie, il ne put trouver le sommeil. Puis, il entendit à côté de lui, tout à côté, comme la fuite d'un petit corps pressé. "J'y suis! Une souris!" Ce fut ensuite un vol, un vol lourd d'ailes velues. "Et maintenant une grosse mouche!" Il se leva, alluma sa lampe et ne vit rien, mais le bruissement d'ailes reprit, le frôla; un vent souffla, si fort qu'il éteignit la lampe. Alors, de tous les coins de la boutique, les bruits montèrent. . . Cloué d'épouvante, M. Forgeot haletait. . . Il les reconnaissait tous; c'était le vol ivre des papillons, la marche cauteleuse des renards, le rampe-muet des chats, l'escalade fulgurante des écureuils; toutes les bêtes de la boutique resuscitaient. Elles ne lui voulaient pas de mal, non, *pas encore*. Pas de bêtes féroces, pas de bêtes bien féroces. Seul un vautour, énorme, pendu au plafond. Celui-là ne bougeait point. M. Forgeot leva vers lui des yeux d'anxiété. Il l'avait empaillé lui-

même. Il lui avait bourré le ventre avec des papiers sur lesquels il y avait des poèmes de lui! Et malgré toute la rumeur qui l'entourait, malgré ces palpitations d'ailes, ces fuites de corps souples et sauvages, ce n'était que de ce vautour qu'il avait peur. S'il se mettait à remuer, ce serait fini . . . Voyons, mieux valait tenter de sortir. M. Forgeot essaya, mais une sorte de paralysie le cloua sur place. Il roula sur le matelas. Alors, il voulut crier, mais au moment où il ouvrait la bouche, il vit les grandes ailes noires qui tremblaient—et il ne put proférer un son, il ne put que regarder. Les pattes du vautour se crispèrent, ses ailes frissonnèrent plus fort, plus fort encore, jusqu'à battre le plafond. Le naturaliste poussa un cri d'horreur, un pauvre cri d'agonie—si faible—et le vautour s'abattit sur sa poitrine. Alors, M. Forgeot se tut, définitivement.

Le lendemain, les journaux publiaient ce fait-divers!

"On apprend la mort mystérieuse d'un naturaliste empailleur du nom de Forgeot. Ce vieillard, qui avait, assure-t-on dans le quartier, des allures louches, a été trouvé inanimé sur un matelas, dans sa boutique, le visage crispé dans une expression d'épouvante indicible. Rien ne peut faire supposer cependant qu'il s'agisse d'un crime. Tout a été trouvé intact dans la boutique. Un vautour empaillé, tombé du plafond sans doute par la pourriture de la ficelle qui le tenait a été trouvé sur la poitrine de M. Forgeot. Le Parquet se livre à une enquête."



## MON CŒUR

Par Henry Spiess

**M**ON cœur, ta vie est lente et consciente à peine;  
 Mon cœur, ta joie est brève et bref est ton plaisir.  
 Et tu n'as pour parer parfois ton avenir,  
 Qu'un peu d'aube et qu'un peu d'espérance lointaine!

# THE PLAYS IN LONDON TOWN

By George Jean Nathan

**A**LTHOUGH an aborigine of Indiana, I feel compelled to admit that London, if not quite so stupendous as Indianapolis, is really more of a metropolis than Terre Haute. I do not wish you to gain from this that I have become possessed of rabid Anglo-maniac tendencies; I do not wish you to believe that, an ocean removed from my native shore, I have forgotten the gospel preached by our Mr. George M. Cohan or the celebrated Hodge-podge picture painted by our Messrs. Tarkington and Wilson. I still realize, of course, that hooray hooray it's a grand old rag, that all dukes and earls are worthless at the core of them and are bent on the seduction of our fair, innocent, inculpable young womanhood, that the King is not one iota better than plain Bill Sweeney who runs the corner saloon in Glens Falls, and that God Himself believes in the Monroe Doctrine! In several ways, however, is it distressing for an American to travel. Travel, hath an ancient saw, broadens one—and when one becomes broadened one begins to have a severe wrestle with oneself to compel oneself to retain whole trust in the traditions imposed upon one simultaneously and coincidentally with diapers.

A journey to London, for example, convinces the American that there may frequently be a considerable nick, a dehiscent dent, in at least one of his amaranthine convictions. From the mysterious journalistic frou-frous called cable reports, he has long been accustomed to inform himself of new British dramatic works of art, of stupefying masterpieces of theatrical ware, of to-heaven-thundering paragons of proscenium goods. And, being one of a na-

tion that (say what you will to the reverse) believes everything it reads, the American has been brought to the conclusion that every play from the pen of a Briton produced in the English capital is of the sort to cause the King and Queen to lean far out of the royal box and give their college yell in an explosion of sheer ecstasy, to make the work of our Eugene Walters and Edward Sheldons look in comparison like a burlesque house oliomargarine and to give the former products of the rest of the world's great dramatists the air of fusty potboilers. Having observed from the cable sources that Miss Kate Sowerby's initial enterprise, "RUTHERFORD AND SON," was variously "a remarkable effort," "an astonishingly incisive piece of dramatic craftsmanship," "a vivid and amazing instance of rare theatrical art," "a *chef d'œuvre* indisputable" and the like, it was but natural for me to enter the little Vaudeville Theater in a vastly humble spirit, sure in my heart of hearts as a mere American play reviewer that I was about to be privileged to lay eyes upon something sent from above, or something the like of which I had rarely, if ever, beheld before. Were I in the habit of setting down views of a play without knowing anything about it—not an unpopular custom in one or two conspicuous quarters even after those quarters have *seen* the play—I am wholly positive that I would have declared "RUTHERFORD AND SON" to be the greatest drama of its time. The difficulty, therefore, with "RUTHERFORD AND SON" is that I have been careless enough to look on it. What we discover here is a praiseworthy interpretive study of a single character set in an atmosphere quivering with immi-

nent drama, yet in which the drama never strikes. Moment after moment, when drama seems about to reveal itself, prolonged chatter stalks through the doorway to assume its place and to dissipate the dream. Now and again the author raises a character's voice to a shriek—and names the result poignant, pricking, acrid drama. Which it is not. The use of the right pedal may assist in the consonance, but the heart and the head are to be reached more acutely by the master hand—or master foot—through its nickel-plated twin to the left.

What Miss Sowerby has achieved is simply an analysis, in the manner of Brioux's *M. Dupont*, of a steel-willed illiberal soul and of the dire machinations of that soul upon the lives of his three children—a transplanting to a British factory settlement, to quote a second reminder, of the motif of "*Les Affaires Sont Les Affaires*." The lady's pen has skill—of that no doubt may exist; her eyes search aptly into the psychologic plexi of individuals as individuals, but they would seem to fail thus far to descry those plexi, those hearts, skid one against the other, save in the most patent sense. We find her a reporter of the individual, of the *one*. Your real dramatist is the reporter of the two—or three, of the meeting place rather than the Morris chair. The tale? A man whose entire concern is the building up of the great enterprise that bears his name and to whom any sacrifice to that end is justifiable—and natural. Under the wheels of this Juggernaut of the Rutherfords, this grim, hungry god of the family, two sons are crushed into nothingness and a neglected daughter, impressed into dish-washing and compressed within four damp walls, is ground into something akin to harlotry. And in the relentless end, the single slight tear of repentance that may seem to glisten in the tyrant father's eye is dried at the thought that when he dies his son's son, now but a baby mewling in its crib, will have grown sufficiently to help warm the boilers that will spin the wheels that will maintain the firm to the everlasting name of Rutherford. Mr. Norman McKinnell's performance of the chief

figure of the presentation is a thoughtful and capital study.

I have penetrated into the secret of the power of the Gaiety girl, the Gaiety girl to whom lyres have long been attuned, to whom Pinero has dedicated his latest play, for whom so many titled youngsters have sacrificed themselves and for whom, indeed, several titled older boys have even laid down their wives. The Gaiety girl, the toast of London, is well bathed! At least she appears to be. I cannot be authentic. I am a virtuous critic. She is a clean-looking animal, unlike the American chorus girl with whom we are sometimes prone to compare her. She is crisp and cool, like a lettuce leaf; and the pink of the early sliced tomato is in her cheeks. Her nails do not shine like headlights and the rims o' them are not anthracitic. The breath of soap lingers in her hair and her ablutions do not seem to have extended only so far as the line of décolleté. Cleanliness of this species is a distinct dramatic climax among some sections of the British populace. It is to some Britons what we call "glamour." And hence, therefore, because of this and so, permit me to introduce to you Lady Tottenham of Sussex against sex, née Lucy Lily of the Gaiety. She is, speaking on the whole, no beauty, this Gaiety girl. True, she is lovelier than most of her English sisters—but she is no beauty. For one eye-biffing picture postcard belle, there are twenty Gaiety girls large of ankle, over-endowed with hip, wide of mouth, opulent of foot, irregular of tooth and of an amphibious mode of gait. But, one and all, by Jove and open plumbing, one and all *they are clean*. The piece at this writing current at the Gaiety is termed "*THE SUNSHINE GIRL*," by Paul Rubens and Cecil Raleigh. It discloses itself to be the conventional assemblage of fairly gratifying tunes of an intensely chiffon nature, of the time-honored story of the lordly owner of the place who disguises himself as "one of the men" in order to woo a Phyllis Dare and to test her affections, and of the hilarious jests relating to drinking out of finger bowls and the necessity for settling up before one can

settle down. Mr. George Grossmith and Mr. Edmund Payne are the comics of the cast.

There are three kinds of thrill: the thrill that plays on the spine, the thrill that plays on the optic nerve and the thrill that plays on the mind. The first may be produced with banal ease. A youngster, let us say, attempts to cross the crowded boulevard. A runaway horse—the youngster in its very path—certain death—you hurry a bit, grab the youngster and pull him to safety in the nick of time. Easy! Absolutely simple! Yet the spectatorial spine is thrilled. A human spine may always be thrilled by the sight of an act or deed which it itself would be too cowardly to perform were it called upon to do so. The optic thrill is simpler still. Filmy lingerie may safely be relied upon in every instance to provide it. That is, in every instance under the age of fifty-five. The flash of a dark lantern at midnight, the deep blue eyes of a lady fair, the sight of the King and Queen booming into the Ascot enclosure, a restaurant check on which the waiter has neglected to charge for the vegetables—all these and countless other things are certain optic thrillers. But the mental thrill! Ah, that is a coat of a different color! How to get it? Where to find it? We of the States are hard put to to discover it American-made. Certainly not in our native novel; certainly not in our native theater. About the only time we at home get a real mental theatrical thrill is when Mr. Augustus Thomas does not produce a play.

The finest mental thrill in all London is once again due to that splendid old rascal, Shaw, G. B. Its name—"FANNY'S FIRST PLAY." Conceived and edited with exquisite sense and humor, the exhibit strides forth majestically as one of the most felicitous and brilliantly diverting mingles of play and by-play that has baptized these eyes with the holy tears of giggle-joy during their long years of critical servitude. Fanny O'Dowda, to outline the thing crudely, as must always be the case where a Shaw tale is set *in parvo* to paper, has written a play. As a birthday gift to

herself, she persuades her father to proffer it with a company of professional actors before the leading London dramatic critics. The latter are not informed as to the authorship of the piece. The play itself is presented, a rare and stimulating fusillade from the self-loading sharp Shaw viewpoint rifle, a droll assemblage of dissenting and disclaiming birdshot with now and then, from some unsuspected angle, a good big fat honest smiting cannon ball. The curtain falls on this play within the play, or presentation, if you prefer the word, as really you must in this instance. The critics are asked what they think of it. "Well, who wrote it?" asks one. "How can I tell if it's good or bad until I know whose it is? If it's by a good author, it's a good play. If it's by a bad author, it's a bad play—and that's all there is to it!" Another critic answers that unquestionably the play is the work of Granville Barker, and goes on to prove his point. Still another insists it must be from the hand of Shaw. "Shaw could not have written it," insists the third critic; "there's passion in this play and that's one quality Shaw's work has not got. The vain attempt at bright epigrams, however, I will admit, smacks of Shaw." And so on. All transcendently witty stuff, not for gallinules and lubbers maybe, but the stuff of which a tired dramatic critic's fondest dreams are made. The acting of the Kingsway company is admirable. Watch you, in America, for these names: Miss Kate Bishop, Miss Dorothy Minto, Mr. Arnold Lucy, Mr. Fewlass Llewellyn, Miss Lillah McCarthy (Mrs. Granville Barker) and Mr. Raymond Lauzerte.

Two grumpy bachelors are visiting a third grumpy bachelor at his country house. The trinity, returning from the links, learn from the manservant that a strange young woman has made herself at home in the third grumpy bachelor's bedroom, where she is even now getting long hairs in his clean brush, spilling talcum powder on his cravats and smelling the whole joint up with screeching scent. "Who is she and how came she?" demands the owner of the premises. But servants nor anyone else



can tell. "Then we must find out at once!" blazes forth the frowning decision. The door to the upper stairway opens and the young woman faces the three men. Her comeliness smacks each one of them across the eyes, and it becomes evident that *cherchez la femme* is here *recherché la femme*. A beautiful face, a rare figure of a woman—and the search for identity may go hang! The bachelor lord-in-chief assures the girl she is not welcome. She returns that she knows she is not, but that she intends remaining in the house for two weeks at least. And, of course, in the end she marries the grumpy bachelor of the third part, it having been developed that she is none other than Mollie Blair, actress, that she has owed her position in the world of paint and powder to the influence of a certain other man, that she long before has promised the latter to become his mistress if ever she arrived at the position she now holds—and that she ran away to safeguard her chemical purity. From the quill of Anthony P. Wharton, we find in the proscenium narrative of this fable at the Prince of Wales Theater—it is named "AT THE BARN"—an incomplex and sugary but somehow pleasant little whiff of romance and counter-romance. The effect of the whole may be compared to a swallow of Crème Yvette, to a mouthful of charlotte russe, to an earful of Leslie Stuart's music, to a session with Alfred Austin's poetry, or, on the whole, to the kind of play Mrs. Leslie Carter does not like. The first act presents a particularly graceful specimen of craftsmanship and deserves its individual sentence of record. The interpreting aggregation is thoroughly efficient and includes Miss Marie Tempest and the Messrs. Norman Trevor, W. Graham Browne, Charles V. France and Ernest Mainwaring.

Comes at the Lyric Carl Rössler's comedy "THE FIVE FRANKFORTERS," done into very-English by Basil Hood. Staged with eminent taste by Mr. McKinnell, we have here another in the seemingly illimitable series of Jew plays, samples of which we of the States have already imbibed in the instances of

"The House Next Door," "Disraeli," "As a Man Thinks," "Meyer and Son," "The Return from Jerusalem," et cetera. The particular virtue of the Rössler vista resides in the truth that unlike all save one of the exhibits at which we have hitherto been spectator, it refrains from enveloping the Jew in the purple robe of majesty, from placing a halo on his head for box office reasons and from attributing to him and to his race all the admirable natural excellencies and blameless moralities that in fact distinctly are not there. The reception of the play, therefore, in the New York theatrical synagogue will be worth watching. The action of the play is laid in the year 1822 in Frankfort, and throws on the screen the evolution through the clink of gold of the sons of the house of Rothschild. Especial merit rests in the performance of the role of Michael Rothschild by Mr. Louis Calvert. There is, incidentally and quite irrelevantly, a young person in the presenting company spoken as Gwladys Gaynor who, were her histrionic talent commensurate with her beauty, unquestionably would be able to make Madame Sarah Bernhardt seem in comparison like a bashful, pigeon-toed beginner in some "Academy of Dramatic Art." The manner of the scenic investiture of the second act, disclosing the castle grounds of the Duke Gustavus, provides a stunning exposition of what may be accomplished through a discreet combination of what is best in Reinhardt and what is best in the overly elaborated scenic school lately become so rampantly popular.

In Mr. Charles Frohman's timely and superior revival of Pinero's farcical romance, "THE AMAZONS," seen at the Duke of York's, we explore into acting of such excellence that it would probably not be recognized as acting by us in America. It is so good we would consider it bad. We have forgotten at home just what really valid acting is—at least, to a very plenteous degree. They have got us to the point where we permit three gowns from Lucile's to supplant talent, where "cuteness" substitutes for intelligence and training and where a right halfback physique and the

attention of Mr. Wetzel and his cutters goes for ability any day in the week—and twice on Wednesdays and Saturdays. In a company including Weedon Grossmith, Godfrey Tearle, Dion Boucicault, Duncan McRae, Miss Ellis Jeffreys, Miss Phyllis Neilson-Terry, Miss Marie Löhr and Miss Pauline Chase, the latter alone indicates incautious schooling. Miss Löhr, incidentally, who is scheduled to appear in our commonwealth during the approaching season, is amply talented and presents, in this estimate, the most coruscating and distinct existence of any of the younger actresses at present visible in the theater of King George.

Mr. B. Macdonald Hastings writes so charmingly in our tongue that it is a pity he has so little to say. I am judging him only from his most recent piece, "LOVE—AND WHAT THEN?" produced at the Playhouse by Mr. Cyril Maude. His earlier work, "The New Sin," had been withdrawn when I arrived for my commanded visit. So far as I am able to appraise him, Mr. Hastings seems to possess the knack of apt epigram, a dextrousness with the verb *en surprise* and a facile mimicry of Shawese, but keen originality is missing and what of engaging news he may have on the tip of his linguiform appendix does not seem to be able to express itself. The piece of which mention has been made is an irritatingly tenuous and redundant effort, having little to tell and telling little—and amusing little. The story concerns a vicar's young wife who one fine morning gets a peep at her delectable naked body in a cheval glass, realizes for the first time that her husband does not sufficiently love her and that she is wasting her life where she is, and decides to look around for a means wherewith to indulge herself in sub rosa outdoor sport, sub rosa in this instance being translated as under the rosebush. The visiting bishop encounters her in the garden and, after an act and a half of dialogue, convinces her that she had best keep her sh—I should say her shoes—on. The story of the play seems to sound better the way I tell it than it really is. Mr. Hastings's treatment is

so evasive that it conceals everything—including the plot. The author's pleasing epigrammatic dexterity may be illustrated with the two following examples: "The Ten Commandments were meant only for the French" and "Cynicism is Truth's other name. When Truth was a very young girl, her parents found that all men shunned her, so they changed her name to Cynicism and all men ran after her and she had lots and lots of suitors—and she finally married a dramatist." The piece, like most of the London plays, is ably acted. The company has in it Cyril Maude, Miss Margery Maude and Eric Maturin.

Despite a singularly supine first act, "MILESTONES," lifted merrily on its course at the Royalty by an idea fresh in the area of the theater, courts a Falstaffian audition and measures large in the estimate of the drama of the London season. Arnold Bennett and Edward Knoblauch, the latter probably the most fertile of the younger Anglo-American playwrights of the day, are the responsible pens and whatever may be laid against them in the instance of this collaborative episodic biography of a family from the year 1860 to the year 1912, they are yet to be credited with having done something soothingly new. Their initial act shows the wooing of Rose Sibley by John Rhead, the futile fight against Rhead's suit by Rose's brother coming as an outgrowth of a business quarrel that has arisen twixt the houses of the two men and the rejection, because of this quarrel, of Sibley by Gertrude Rhead. The succeeding act, occurring twenty-five years later, discloses John and Rose living in the old Rhead mansion with their daughter Emily, and brings forth their opposition to the latter's marrying the man of her heart, a young inventor. The Rheads wish Emily to wed into social position. Gertrude Rhead, now an old maid, like Odette of "The Lily," comes with tirade to Emily's side, crying out that love alone matters and offering her own sorry life in example of the shadow that spreads when love is bargained away for anything else, however righteous, however stern or massive, however stunning

in worldly goods. But Emily is sacrificed. Years go; a new generation; Rhead is now an old man, his wife an old woman. It is the day of their golden wedding anniversary. Emily is with them, as are her son and daughter. Emily's husband is dead. Her girl, the Honorable Muriel Pym, is heart-set upon young Richard, son of the clan of Sibley. But again old Rhead protests. Richard is poor. Emily's daughter should look to a star more golden. Still Gertrude Rhead, now shriveled and bitterer than bitter, lifts her quavering voice in the cause of love. She urges Emily to remember what *her* life became when she obeyed her father and forsook her inventor sweetheart. The new generation, however, is less docile than the generation of the years before. Emily's daughter and young Sibley are stubborn in their decision and willy-nilly will marry. And, in the final firelight, forgiveness becomes theirs; Emily is wrapped in the arms of her first sweetheart, now a member of the House of Commons; and the warmth of the blazing grate reaches out its amber fingers to all but the withered gray creature who in the long ago let love foolishly go out of her life forever. A pleasant story, a novel story, a story to waken the spring-time that slumbers in this generation's souls. I prefer to hold in leash a record of its defects and periodic frailties of conception until a time when I shall feel more like finding fault.

If we are to believe Mr. Robert Hichens (and we are not), the faintest whiff of the Sahara Desert is sufficient to make strong white men stagger wildly, passionately, burningly toward the lips of the first handy female and to make the first handy female carry on as if someone had dropped a hot penny down her bodice. I have been assured quite to the contrary by men who drink their whiskey straight and are able to smoke before breakfast without giving an imitation of the English channel, that the leading effects exercised by the desert are the registering in the individual of

a monumental and amorous desire to ring for ice-water and to wish oneself back home where there is nothing hotter than a Victoria Cross novel. I have been assured by other persons of desert experience, furthermore, that the Sahara is possessed of no more highly developed sex instinct than our own homely Brighton Beach, our own homelier Atlantic City, or our own even homelier Willow Grove Park of Philadelphia. All this is introductory to Mr. Hichens's dramatic quasi-sequel to "The Garden of Allah." "*BELLA DONNA*" it is, and the play has been made out of the book by James Bernard Fagan. In proscenium form, the best that may be said for the play as a play is that it reveals one interest-holding act, the third, laid on the deck of the *Loulia*, where the doctor battles against the machinations of the hussy who is trying to poison the life simultaneously out of her husband and his best friend. The balance of the dramatic exhibit is very crude and smells of a red-covered book and should therefore win a large popularity in America when it is divulged in the autumn. To Sir George Alexander, who plays the leading role, goes the respect that my pen has to offer to one of the surest, suavest—why, hang this critical fear of the superlative!—one of the very finest actors on the English-speaking stage. Mrs. Patrick Campbell is the Mrs. Chestow of the entertainment, which is on view at St. James's.

At Wyndham's Theater, behold "*JELF's*," by Mr. Horace Annesley Vachell. A dejected, badly composed piece, meandering toilfully and purposelessly in the purlieus of scented gasconade. Redeemed only by a right jolly performance on the part of the talented Mr. Gerald Du Maurier, we sit in attendance here upon the humorless exposition of a platitudinous section of sentimentalism having to do with a man who almost wrecks his own bank so that the bank of the man his darling once loved may be saved. 'Tis a pretty idea!



# PROSE FICTION AD INFINITUM

By H. L. Mencken

FIRST of all, let me offer my circular answer and apology to those dear publishers who bombard me with pained and copious notes, asking why the devil I haven't reviewed this book or that. Truly a publisher, whatever his lack of virtue, has a just complaint when he goes to the trouble to swathe his latest best-seller in armor of corrugated cardboard, and then to paste an elegant label on the façade of that cardboard, and then to write my name, learned degrees and studio address on that label, and then to deposit the whole in the United States mails, with sixteen cents in stamps affixed, or in the care and keeping of some immoral express company, paying twenty-two cents in advance—truly he harbors legitimate annoyance when that is the last he ever hears of it in this world. But what would you, messieurs? How can I help it? I am but one reviewer—and there are a thousand novelists. I have but one œsophagus—and there are a thousand cooks. Believe me when I tell you that I do my darndest and recall to you that angels could do no more. For four years I have averaged a novel a day. On many a rainy Sunday I have read two or three, and in one week, incommunicado and on my back, I actually got through twenty-four. But that, of course, was extraordinary, unparalleled, a unique collocation of bravura and bravado. I do not say I'll ever do it again. With one such exploit in a lifetime the average man must rest content. It is not given to mortals to work incessantly upon such high gears, to rise so stupendously above the common level of achievement. I look back upon the deed with undisguised pride, and even

with a touch of wonder. It ranks me with astounding and inordinate fellows—Hobson the osculator, Holmes the homicide, Home-run Kelly, Butcher Weyler and Brigham Young the matroniac.

Say I'm weary, say I'm sad;

Say that health and wealth have missed me;  
Say I'm growing old, but add—

—that I once read twenty-four novels in a week—not, perhaps, from cover to cover, skipping not a word, cutting every page—but still diligently and even thoroughly, and to the end that the ensuing reviews, composed on my discharge from hospital, were pretty fair and comprehensive, as reviews go in this vale of crime, and so pleased half of the publishers and almost one of the novelists.

But what I started out to do was not to boast about my Gargantuan appetite for prose fiction—an appetite so insatiable that in the intervals between best-sellers it sends me back to "Huckleberry Finn" and "Germinal" and "Kim" and "Vanity Fair"—but to apologize to the dear publishers for occasionally overlooking a single novel, or even a whole flock of novels. I try to have a glance at every one they send me, and to go through at least thirty every thirty days, but after all I have only two hands, and thus it sometimes happens, when nine or ten come bouncing in together, that I muff three or four of them. And again it sometimes happens that I am utterly unable, with the best intentions in the world, to read far enough into a given volume to find out what it is about. And yet again it sometimes happens that, having found out, I am unable to describe the contents without violating the laws against the use of profane and

indecent language. And finally it sometimes happens—more often, indeed, than merely sometimes—that my toilsome surmounting of all these difficulties is rendered null and vain by assassins in THE SMART SET office, who reduce me from eight pages to six without warning, or pi a couple of galleys of my arduous type, or send their devil to me with orders to let novels alone for a month and give them something sapient and racy about the latest published dramas or the new treatises on psychotherapy or the lilts and la-de-las of Mr. Badger's sweating bards. All this by way of explanation and apology, not only to the Barabbases who publish, but also to those kind readers who protest in courteous terms when I happen to neglect their favorites among the Indiana genii. The whole thing, I must admit, is rather a muddle. I do not review upon any systematic, symmetrical plan, with its roots in logic and the *jus gentium*, but haphazard and without a conscience, and so it may occur that a fourth-rate novel gets a page, or even two pages, while a work of high merit goes inequitably to my ash-barrel and is hauled away in the night, unwept, unhonored and unsung, along with my archaic lingerie and my vacant beer bottles.

Which brings us at once to "JULIA FRANCE AND HER TIMES," by Gertrude Atherton (*Macmillan*), the thickest and juiciest novel of the current crop, if not the most subtle and sagacious. The heroine of this singularly lavish fiction, when we first encounter her, bears the name of Julia Edis and is living with her mother at the ancestral home on the little island of Nevis, in the West Indies, a godforsaken and spooky place. Julia, at this stage of her career, is eighteen years old and as innocent as the average girl of eight. When her mother tells her that she is to marry Harold France, an officer in H. M. Navy and heir to a dukedom, she expresses the ingenuous hope that he has some babies for her to play with, or, at any rate, that he will get some for her as soon as possible. Alas, Harold himself is no such virgin. On the contrary, he is a man of really

extraordinary iniquities, even for a sailor—a devotee, it would appear, of outlandish, levantine vices, too terrible to be mentioned—a voluptuary so all-fired voluptuous that even the captain of his ship, certainly no prude, thinks it only decent to warn Mrs. Edis. But that Spartan mother will have none of the captain's friendly advice. A dabbler in the black art of divination, and pupil of the grandson of the seeress who "so accurately cast the horoscope of Josephine Beauharnais," she has herself platted Julia's future with astrological compasses, and the fact that Julia must one day be a duchess is as plain to her as the rising of the sun. Julia must be a duchess—and Harold France is heir to a duke. What pair of premises could carry a more obvious conclusion?

But the moral captain, even as the wedding bells ring, yet makes a last, heroic effort to save Julia. That is to say, he recalls Harold to his ship and sails away for the Spanish Main. And after that the gods step in and Harold is laid low by typhoid fever. Thus Julia, for a while at least, suffers not the appalling caresses and illuminations of that unspeakable monster. But none the less the seven veils of her innocence slip from her one by one, and within the space of a few weeks. Before Harold gets to England, whither she has gone to wait for him, she is already a shrewd, self-reliant and somewhat blasé little baggage, and soon she is carrying things with a high hand. She boldly sauces the old duke, she invites his enemies to his house, she runs up astonishing dress-makers' bills, she forces Harold to give her money, she flirts shamelessly with Nigel Herbert, the eminent society Socialist and uplift novelist. Worse still, she encourages the worship of young Dan Tay, an American youth of fifteen, who is all for carrying her off to California, Harold or no Harold. And when, after many years, Harold dies insane, after having first lost the dukedom by the sudden marriage and incredible prolificacy of the old duke, it is Dan that she marries. But not until near the end of their honeymoon!

So much for the bald story. In its

detail it is as prodigal and catholic as the Diary of the eager Pepys. One gets glimpses of every great event and mania of the last two decades, from the invasion of Cuba to the rising of the Sufragettes, from the San Francisco earthquake to the revival of mysticism, from parlor Socialism to the Boer War. Julia, once Harold is in a madhouse, goes off to the East for a long rest and there she meets Hadji Sadra and is made privy to all the recondite secrets of Hindoo "philosophy." One of the things she learns is how "to switch thought off and on"; another is how to "relegate her femaleness to the depths." Her mother's astrology, it appears, was merely tantalizing buncombe, but this Oriental magic really works. And then, home again, Julia is converted to the suffrage, and takes up with Mrs. Pankhurst, and goes through the country spellbinding, and is presently thrown into jail. A dizzy whirl of movements, arguments, combats, deviltries; a phantasmagoria of newspaper clippings. Not only Julia herself, but all the others, grab eagerly at every fresh novelty—political, philosophical, sociological or metaphysical. Nigel Herbert wins a Nobel prize, consecrates himself to melancholy celibacy and reaches the House of Lords a Socialist! Dan Tay takes a hack at the grafters in San Francisco, goes honeymooning with Julia before Harold is dead and resolves to enter Congress as a Progressive of the extreme left. And Lady Ishbel Jones, Julia's dearest friend, hurls the millions of her Welsh husband into his teeth and opens a millinery shop in Bond Street. Not a yell for recruits goes unanswered by that crowd of valiant experimenters. They touch Babalism on the one side and Rooseveltism on the other. They go in for deep breathing, hunger strikes, hypnotism and blackmail. They are for peace and they are for war. One hears in their discourse the discordant and amazing echoes of Marx and Tolstoi, Nietzsche and Link Steffens, Dr. Krafft-Ebing and Mary Wollstonecraft, Regiomontanus and William T. Stead.

And yet—and yet—when all the pow-wow is over, it does not appear that Mrs.

Atherton has manufactured a first-rate novel, nor even a respectable second-rate novel. Not all the movement and color, not all the borrowing from current history, not all the extravagance of detail can conceal the weakness of the principal characters, the improbability of the central events. The trouble with her method, in brief, is that it leaves her people unaccounted for, that it describes them too much and explains them too little. She shows them doing all sorts of amazing things, and in the showing she is infallibly brisk and entertaining, but she seldom gets into their acts that appearance of inevitability which makes for reality. The effect is there—but where is the cause? Is it credible, after all, that a girl as extraordinarily ingenuous as Julia, after a brief schooling by silly women, should become an intellectual match for such a serpent as Harold, or even for such an old orang-outang as the duke? And supposing her to be actually inoculated with this sagacity by some convenient miracle, would it not save her later on from the New Thought rumble-bumble of Hadji Sadra, that repatriated Regent street sorcerer? Is the Julia who goes to jail for an idea the same Julia who cherishes the calf-love of a boy of fifteen? And is the Dan Tay whose calf-love, with all its best-seller extravagances, remains unquenched from fifteen to thirty the same Dan Tay who has made millions in the stock market and won his way in politics? Alack, I fear me not. The truth is that in describing all of these folk Mrs. Atherton has gone little deeper than the surface—that she has neglected the first business of a serious novelist, which is to interpret and account for her characters, to criticize life as well as describe it—that she has shown them doing things without making us feel that they had to do them. In a word, she has left them mere dummies, with the sawdust of the theater in their arteries. Harold is a villain out of Drury Lane melodrama; Tay is the electric young American of English satire and our own best-sellers; the duke is a dear old friend; Ishbel is another; Julia herself is nothing more than a mixture, mechanical rather than



chemical, of three or four conventional heroines—the ordinary sentimental heroine, the rebellious wife heroine, the “advanced” heroine, the heroine knee-deep in transcendental asphodel. Thus the story, on close inspection, begins to go to pieces. Immeasurably better written than most of our common romances, for Mrs. Atherton is an indubitably clever artisan, it yet deserves to be ranked with such confectionery, and not with the genuine novels of its generation. Put it beside “Ann Veronica” or “Evelyn Innes” or “Jennie Gerhardt” or “The Old Wives’ Tale” or any other serious study of feminine psychology and at once its external tinsel and internal vacuity become painfully apparent.

Another current fictioneer who strikes somewhat lower than he aims is Samuel Merwin, who gives us, in “THE CITADEL” (Century Co.), a glimpse of the Progressive Movement, that fantastic compound of sentimentality and buffoonery. The Hon. John Garwood, congressman from Illinois, rises one day in the House of Representatives and is delivered of the somewhat obvious thought that the Constitution of the United States swears as loudly at democracy as all the grand dukes in Russia. This remark, as I say, scarcely drips with originality, but all the same John’s forthright manner of putting it into words vastly shocks the audience of bad lawyers, petty bosses and mountebanks that he addresses, and so he goes upon the first page of the newspapers for three days and is marked for butchery by The Interests. Appalled by his own daring and more so by the impending axe, he is in a rather humid state of mind when Margaret Lansing drops in to see him. Margaret is a biologist in the Agriculture Department and a Progressive to her finger tips. It is she that stills John’s fear of himself and inspires him to go back to Illinois and do battle with The Interests, and to her he owes the sweet taste in the bitter cup when The Interests fall upon him and massacre him and a grovelling Scandinavian is sent to Congress in his place. Finally, of course, John marries her—but not until he has

first withdrawn honorably from his engagement to Ethel Buchanan, daughter of Richard H. Buchanan, local head and archfiend of The Interests aforesaid.

If it was Mr. Merwin’s aim to give us a slice of the Progressive life in These States—and I have no doubt whatever that it was—the result must be set down a failure, for he neglects altogether to show us the genesis of the divine frenzy in John Garwood’s veins. We see a representative of a safe and rotten borough suddenly run amuck, and are left wondering wherefore and why. Progressivism, in brief, is depicted as a disease of sudden and devastating onset, and even the long discussions between John and Margaret and the speeches of John in his district fail to illuminate the period of incubation. But if we accept John as we find him and do not cross-examine him too severely, it must be admitted that he gives a very good show for the money. He leads us through a realistic and exciting political campaign, he makes excellent speeches, he shows a decent toleration for his enemies, he refrains from playing the messiah, he leans upon Margaret very humanly, and in the end he takes his defeat like a man. It is in the last act, indeed, rather than in the first four, that Mr. Merwin is most skillful and convincing. John and Margaret have an old-fashioned honeymoon, with a good deal more kissing and cuddling in it than Progressivism, and when at last they get back to Washington and the dashed John finds his dusty office table covered with letters from admirers in “more than a score of States” and “scores of offers for lectures and addresses” and “dozens of requests for magazine articles”—when we come to this final tableau, with hope rising in the breast of the defeated John, and pretty Margaret there to help it with a conjugal buss, then it is that Mr. Merwin does his best writing and makes excuse enough for his story. Not a story of much depth and beam, to be sure, but still a pleasant one, and not as pontifical as it might have been.

As for Edith Macvane, she comes with two stories—and not a breath of serious purpose in either. One of them,



called "TARANTELLA" (*Houghton-Mifflin*), shows us how Mrs. Cynthia Godfrey goes to Rome to petition the Pope to release her from her unspeakable husband, Mr. W. R. Godfrey, and how she there falls head over heels in love with the Duca Alessandro di Fiorestanni, the handsome nephew of the Signor Marchese Cardinal di Roccabella, and how that love, by arousing animosities, works against her petition, and how she is set free in the end by the murder of her husband, who is mistaken for another man, and how she then falls into Alessandro's arms. Dashing stuff! And so is the other tale, "HER WORD OF HONOR" (*Little - Brown*). Here we observe the flight of Mlle. Elise-Florence-Marie de Vauquières de Clugny, orphan of the late Marquis Étienne de Vauquières de Clugny, from Brent Castle, the ancestral dungeon of her English uncle and aunt, the enormously fashionable Duke and Duchess of Porthaven, and of their six gawky daughters. Lili (for so they call her) decides to seek her fortune in America, but all she knows of America is the fact that her dead papa loved in youth an American girl named Harriet, whose home was then at 14 East Tenth Street, Manhattan. Is Harriet still alive? And will she welcome Lili? Mrs. Ethelbert V. Cobb, who cultivates Lili aboard the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, has grave doubts of it. But why worry? Mrs. Cobb herself is a better fairy godmother than the half-mythical Harriet. She has \$50,000,000 and a son called Victor, whose hot blood beats for a chorus girl. If Lili will marry Victor and so save him from the chorus girl, Mrs. Cobb will settle \$25,000,000 upon bride and groom. All she asks for herself is that Lili introduce her to the Porthavens and the de Vauquièreses.

Done! Lili can't find Harriet at 14 East Tenth Street, which is now occupied by the families of Lubliner, Markowitz, Zadolowski, Feigenbaum, Lombroso and Ferrandini—and as for Victor, his description is taking and she hasn't seen him. . . . But the marriage, of course, never takes place! No need to tell you that! You are, as I am, an old hand at novel reading, a veteran of many

an amatory field, an ancient of romance. You know that heroines never marry such louts as Victor Cobb—Victor with his fat hands, his xanthous freckles, his gross appetite for spangles. And so you are not at all surprised when Lili falls in love with Henry Stuart, the daring young airman and rising barrister, son of the intensely aristocratic Mrs. Mecklenburgh Stuart, nor do you more than lift a sophisticated eyebrow later on when it turns out that Mrs. Mecklenburgh Stuart is the long-lost Harriet and that she still dreams of her Étienne. Ha, ha! We know!—we browned and battle-scarred campaigners! Fool us O novelists, if you can! We are privy to your tricks! We penetrate your ambushes! Even all of Lili's fine talk about her sacred word of honor and the motto of the de Vauquièreses—*Vauquières tient parole*—even all that doesn't lead us astray. From the very start we suspect that loathsome Victor will bolt with his Broadway Camille and that Lili will marry the brave and sightly Henry. . . . Well, well, why not? At ease in a hammock, who asks for better fare? An orthodox and harmless tale, fashionable without being lascivious.

But we had better hurry a bit if we are to get through many more novels, for space runs out and they keep on bouncing in. Here, for example, is a group of no less than eight historical romances—eloquent proof that the day of swash-buckling in fiction is not yet past, that readers still like to be taken back to the good old, far-off, spacious times—

When the muscles swelled in strain,  
As the steel found rest in a brave man's breast  
And the axe in a brave man's brain.

I quote from dithyrambs of my own, composed in some lamented yesteryear, under the combined influence of youth, the cheaper narcotics and "The Helmet of Navarre." Much of the lost thrill came back this hot Sabbath morning as I idled through "THE TOUCHSTONE OF FORTUNE," by Charles Major (*Macmillan*), a first-rate yarn of Restoration days, with Jack Churchill, James Crofts and the Jennings girls making liars of the historians at every turn. Mr. Ma-

jor does that sort of thing with truly admirable skill—and not since “When Knighthood was in Flower” has he been in better form. The other romances of the octette are “BEGGARS AND SORNERERS,” by Allan McAulay (*Lane*), a gay tale of plotting and grafting among the Jacobins who infested Amsterdam in the late 1740’s; “THE MINISTER OF POLICE,” by Henry Moutjoy (*Bobbs-Merrill*), a galloping chapter out of the France of Richelieu; “THE SHADOW OF POWER,” by Paul Bertram (*Lane*), the diary of a Spanish governor in the mauled and bleeding Netherlands; “THE PRISON FLOWER,” by Romaine Callender (*Badger*), a Napoleonic tale; “A PLAYTHING OF THE GODS,” by Carl Gray (*Sherman-French*), which takes us to the California of the warring Spaniards and Gringos; and “THE KNIGHTLY YEARS,” by W. M. Ardagh (*Lane*), wherein we taste the strange and invigorating air of the Canary Islands in the reign of Isabella the Catholic of Spain. I said there were eight of these sagas altogether, but a more careful count shows only seven. Very well, let us throw in two Zenda books to balance the reckoning. One is “THE LAST TRY,” by John Reed Scott (*Lippincott*), which introduces us anew to Queen Dehra of Valeria and her American consort, Major Armand Dalberg, U.S.A., retired, old friends of every connoisseur. The other is “THE GREATER JOY,” by Margaret Blake (*Dillingham*), in which no less than one hundred and eighty-three pages are required to describe the seduction of Miss Alice Vaughn, an American girl, by Baron Ulrich von Dette, a fascinating German. An extremely tedious business. Later on Ulrich becomes King of Hohenhoff-Hohe, “the most important of the kingdoms of the German empire, except Prussia and Bavaria,” and it is suggested to him that he retire Alice on a pension and marry a royal wife. Even Alice herself speaks for the plan. That is to say, she proposes, in her delicate, diplomatic way, that he “insure the succession” and then return to her. But Ulrich still loves her so madly that all other women disgust him, and so he abdicates and marries her. Luscious stuff!

Whether “THE STORY OF A PLOUGHBOY,” by James Bryce (*Lane*), is a novel or an attempt at romantic autobiography I can’t tell you. The thing is written in the first person, the author constantly uses the name of Bryce in referring to his hero, and the general plan, with its vagueness, its blind alleys and its anti-climaxes, strongly suggests reminiscence. But against these evidences set the incredible copiousness and accuracy of dialogues that no man could remember across twenty years—and you have a pretty problem. Fortunately, there is no need to solve, nor even to attempt to solve it. The book as it stands carries its own justification. It is a remarkably acute and persuasive study of a second-rate personality, weak in most of the principal affairs of life, and yet curiously obstinate under it all. Maltreated and neglected as a boy, this James Bryce gets his start by awakening the sympathy of his betters, and soon he is on the road to security as assistant factor of a large estate in Scotland. But for all his ardent wooing of advantage a sentimental sympathy for the underdog lingers in him, and in the end we find him throwing up his post and going back to the fields, a sort of muddled, parochial Tolstoi. His best girl loses a very promising beau in the process, but after all it is probably her own fault, for not until she has accused him of toadying to his rich employer does his obscure unrest begin to take definite form. A picture, crudely drawn, but still wonderfully like, of a half-baked, moony fellow, a victim of mental dyspepsia, of flying pains in the conscience. If you are for novelty, if you tire of the obvious psychology of the orthodox novels, don’t miss this book.

Another such weak and shallow fellow is to be found in “THE CANDIDATE FOR TRUTH,” by J. D. Beresford (*Little-Brown*). He is none other than our old friend, Jacob Stahl, whose “Early History” we all read with interest and edification last year. In this second volume of what is to be a trilogy, Jacob is rescued from despair by the Rev. the Hon. Cecil Barker, a bizarre and amazing fisher of men, and set going as a

writer of advertisements. The Rev. Cecil makes a gallant effort to reconcile Jacob and his wife, the unspeakable Lola of Vol. I, but Lola declines without thanks, and soon Jacob is engaged upon those adventures of amour that have been his drama and his curse since his nonage. A girl named Freda Cairns, daughter of an anarchist and herself an apostle of free love, catches his roving eye; the immoral Madeline Felmersdale, now Lady Paignton and the scandal of a not-too-squeamish peerage, swoops down upon him again and nearly carries him off; and the impossible Mrs. Latimer, a fading widow with money in the bank, does her best to snare him. But it is Betty Gale, half-owner of his boarding-house in Bloomsbury, that finally wins him—Betty with her plump arms, her steady blue eyes and her matter-of-fact outlook upon the world. As the curtain comes down the two are preparing to join fortunes, Lola or no Lola. Luckily, there is to be a third act. Mr. Beresford has made Jacob so real that it would be cruel to leave him thus. Will the capable Betty make a man of him? After half a lifetime of shilly-shallying, of purposeless groping, of wasted effort, will he make his way in the end? Certainly we guests at the clinic want to know. And meanwhile, let us thank Mr. Beresford for another excellent piece of writing.

There is merit, too, in "THE BRUTE," by Frederic Arnold Kummer (*Watt*), particularly the merit of simple, straightforward writing. Mr. Kummer disdains the common tricks of best-seller rhetoric, just as he disdains the common best-seller heroics. The result is a tale that will undoubtedly hold your attention, whatever your dissent from its ultimate preachment. The central character, Edith Rogers, is a pretty and unstable woman married to a plodding and unromantic engineer. Eight years of this marriage, with its sordid struggles and hopes deferred, disgust her beyond endurance, and so she is ripe for deviltries when an old suitor, Billy West, comes out of Colorado with half a million. Billy is honorable enough, as men go in this indecent world, and for a while

he is loyal to Donald Rogers, who is an old, old friend, but the palpable willingness of Edith breaks down his defenses and they finally decide to bolt. Before they can do so, however, Billy falls ill, and death is upon him in a week. He leaves his half million to Edith, and Donald, seeing only old friendship in the matter, permits her to take it.

But not for long. Accident reveals the whole unpalatable truth, and there ensues the struggle that is the main business of the little drama. Donald orders Edith to give up the money, and Edith, inflamed by the luxury within her grasp, refuses to do so. Thereupon Donald takes their joint infant and departs. Sobriety now falls upon the erstwhile defiant Edith. Her child is gone, her husband is gone, her lover is gone. Setting the first two against the money, she enters upon that doubt which is the beginning of disaster. After all, she was never in love with Billy: it was only the dream of ease, of magnificence, of surcease from struggle, the vision of a silly and shallow woman, that lured her. Without Donald and the boy her world is suddenly empty. Woman-like, she now attempts a compromise. She will give up the money—but to the boy. He, at least, is innocent of wrong-doing, and it would be a shame to make him lose by his mother's folly. But when she goes to Donald with this plan his disconcerting and saving answer is to knock her down. And there, on her knees and at his feet, the truth penetrates and saves her. Here is a man—*her* man. Set him against the money and it straightway shrinks to a heap of dirty metal. Weak and vacillating, she needs a master, a hero, a boss. So the good ship Rogers, if not actually un battered, at least weathers the storm. "There is still hope for you," says Donald, "and for me."

A somewhat difficult story to manage, for the mental processes of Edith are dark and devious, but Mr. Kummer manages it admirably. He makes credible the treason of West, the easy surrender of Edith and the fatuous ignorance of Donald, and he makes credible later on the whole play of emotion be-

tween husband and wife. That a mere blow with the fist should change a foolish woman into a woman of sense, a shameless rebel into a loyal wife—this, surely, is hard to believe. But we are not asked to believe it. The actual blow is the mere climax, the final *sforzando*, of a struggle which begins much further back, and is foreshadowed, indeed, from the very start. The chief defect of the book is not in the structure, but in its detail. One feels that Mr. Kummer would have made a much better story if he had gone in for a greater particularity. As it is, he has frequently sacrificed the due elucidation of character to the less important business of getting on with his plot. But even as it stands, it reveals a genuine capacity for the art and science of hypothetical psychology, and gives plain promise of good work to come.

In "THE MAINSPRING," by Charles Agnew MacLean (*Little-Brown*), a somewhat elemental fable is dignified by clever handling. Jessup Craven, a giant of finance, is dying at his home on Long Island Sound, and his associates are trying to keep the fact dark until his son, Larry, can get back from Europe and take charge of the family cheque-book. But it gets abroad nevertheless, at least as far as the camp of Craven's foes and the office of one New York newspaper, and so the former kidnap Larry, who is a weak and besotted fellow, and the latter sends Lawrence Ashmore, a sharp reporter, to worm his way into the Craven house and find out what is going on. Ashmore succeeds—but only to find himself a prisoner. What happens to him afterward—how he is forced to impersonate the missing Larry and afterward does it willingly and finally finds himself in the midst of astounding and romantic adventures—for all this you must go to the book. It is an unpretending thing, with more than one frank concession in it to the league rules for best-sellers, but it also has its moments.

Finally we come to the month's masterworks by McCutcheon, Vance, Oppenheim and the other tried and true virtuosi. The McCutcheon volume is called "HER WEIGHT IN GOLD" (*Dodd-*

*Mead*), and tells of an impecunious young man who agrees to marry a fat girl for that consideration. Just before the wedding she falls ill and loses a hundred pounds—and he loses \$21,911. Comical stuff, I have no doubt, at all events to persons who enjoy the comic supplements. The Vance and Oppenheim stories are "THE BANDBOX" (*Little-Brown*) and "THE LIGHTED WAY" (*Little-Brown*), respectively. In each, so far as I have got into them, there is an incessant flow of hazards. Neither author takes himself seriously for a minute, and neither is dull for half a minute. Still more excitement in "THE SAINTSBURY AFFAIR," by Roman Doubleday (*Little-Brown*) and "A CHAIN OF EVIDENCE," by Carolyn Wells (*Lippincott*), the one dealing with a murder and the other with a murder plus blackmail, and both ending upon the sweet note of love. And so on down the row—"THE MARRIAGE OF CAPTAIN KETTLE," by C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne (*Bobbs-Merrill*), in which we peer back into the past of that immortal mariner and see the genesis of his fame; "A MAN AND HIS MONEY," by Frederic Isham (*Bobbs-Merrill*), in which a beautiful American girl is kidnaped by a rascally Russian and rescued by the heroic Horatio Heatherbloom; "HE COMES UP SMILING," by Charles Sherman (*Bobbs-Merrill*), in which a hobo of superior mind steals a millionaire's clothes, goes into society in them and so wins the love of a beautiful girl; and "HIS WORLDLY GOODS," by Margaretta Tuttle (*Bobbs-Merrill*), which I have found less engrossing, despite its headlong movement, than a publisher's note about the author, who is said to put in her time "writing one complete story a month for a magazine, turning out an occasional novelette of from twenty-five thousand to thirty-five thousand words for the same publication, doing special work to order for a score of periodicals, writing novels, giving personal attention to her husband and two children, overseeing the details of the work in a big house, and meeting the requirements imposed upon her by her position in the social life of Cincinnati." Let that astonishing testimonial go for a review.

# THE HAUNTED MINISTER

By Katharine Lee Bates

THE steeple still points from sands aglow  
With the roses of old Cape Cod,  
Where a handful of fisherfolk, long ago,  
Called them a man of God;  
And their handgrip, rough from the fierce harpoon,  
Was the heartier that he came  
A youth in his blushing honeymoon,  
On his arm a fairy dame.

Never so frolic a minister's wife  
Sat in a Puritan pew,  
But the people bloomed into fairer life  
While her year of queendom flew;  
Then fell sorrow, like snow in May;  
Those rose lips paled to pearl;  
Not for her husband might she stay;  
Not for her baby girl.

The minister's chestnut hair turned white,  
And his young, young heart went wild.  
He could not bear the torturing sight  
Of that fatal, motherless child.  
He shuddered the babe from his priestly arm  
In the very christening,  
So that the wee back came to harm,  
And she grew a twisted thing.

He hated her more for her body's disgrace,  
If more his hate could be,  
But her mother's blue eyes in her elfin face  
Laughed with her mother's glee;  
Till at last, when the child, in a rosebud wreath,  
Danced out to meet him so,  
Flouting his anger in the teeth,  
He slew her with one mad blow.

*The morning through, in a sky deep blue  
Sailed clouds all lily white,  
And as eve drew nigh, on a strange white sky  
Blue clouds forewent the night;  
But he dared not lift his eyes to the drift  
Of that beauty calm and sweet,  
Lest those heavens should turn to the flames that burn  
About God's Judgment Seat.*

## THE SMART SET

No voice accused him, as, faint of soul,  
 He followed the tiny bier;  
 And his lifetime wore from dole to dole,  
 A lonely man, austere,  
 With what the Cape called the pulpit gift,  
 For with terrible tone and stare  
 He would picture the day when veils should lift  
 And the sinner's heart lie bare.

His prayers in church seemed to beat at the bars  
 Of mercy and shake the Throne;  
 But he could not pray 'neath the midnight stars,  
 He could only crouch and moan.  
 No man accused him, but Nature knew  
 That ancient mark of Cain.  
 All waves that flashed and all wings that flew  
 Remembered their playmate slain.

From the hour the song sparrow's little brown breast  
 Poured its seraph praise to the dawn,  
 Till after the robins had gone to rest,  
 One dream note luting on,  
 He stopped his ears to the lyric flood  
 Of jubilant April sound,  
 For fear he should hear the innocent blood  
 That called to him from the ground.

Ever his agony quickened with spring,  
 With the scuds of silver rain,  
 With the climbing suns, and the blossoming,  
 Till a fire was in his brain;  
 But the fragrant, pitiless season grew  
 To June, as a tide inflows,  
 Till all the dooryards were myrtle blue,  
 And the waysides pink with rose.

*Blue eyes, amazed, from the myrtle gazed,  
 For whithersoever he went  
 In his path would be, would pluck at his knee,  
 A rosebush seawind-bent,  
 Misshapen, sweet, and his furious feet  
 Would trample its blooms apart,  
 But still it smiled, like a murdered child,  
 And its thorns were in his heart.*



DOMESTIC felicity cannot be preserved in family jars.



IF beauty is skin deep, we should not wonder if some matrimonial ventures look like skin games.



Assuan Dam, part of the Nile system, one of the greatest engineering projects of its kind.

## The Nile System—The Bell System

For thousands of years Egypt wrestled with the problem of making the Nile a dependable source of material prosperity.

But only in the last decade was the Nile's flood stored up and a reservoir established from which all the people of the Nile region may draw the life-giving water all the time.

Primitive makeshifts have been superseded by intelligent engineering methods. Success has been the result of a comprehensive plan and a definite policy, dealing with the problem as a whole and adapting the Nile to the needs of all the people.

To provide efficient telephone service in this country, the same fundamental principle has to be recognized. The entire country must be considered within the scope of one system, intelligently guided by one policy.

It is the aim of the Bell System to afford universal service in the interest of all the people and amply sufficient for their business and social needs.

Because they are connected and working together, each of the 7,000,000 telephones in the Bell System is an integral part of the service which provides the most efficient means of instantaneous communication.

**AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY  
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES**

***One Policy***

***One System***

***Universal Service***



## Conspicuous Nose Pores

### How to reduce them

Complexions, otherwise flawless, are often ruined by conspicuous nose pores. The blood circulation in the nose is comparatively poor, therefore does not keep the pores open as they should be. Instead they clog up, collect dirt and become enlarged.

### Begin to-night to use this treatment

Wring a cloth from hot water, lather with Woodbury's Facial Soap, then hold it to your face. When the heat has expanded the pores, rub in a fresh lather of Woodbury's. *Rub it in.* Repeat this hot water and lather application several times, then finish by rubbing the nose for a few minutes *with a lump of ice.*

Woodbury's Facial Soap cleanses the pores and *acts as a stimulant.* This treatment with Woodbury's brings the blood to the nose, and promotes a better circulation, which is just what the nose needs. It strengthens the muscular fibres of the nose pores so that they can contract properly. This is what gradually reduces the enlarged pores, causes them to contract, making them practically inconspicuous.

Woodbury's Facial Soap costs 25 a cake. No one hesitates at the price *after their first cake.* Get a cake to-night.

## Woodbury's Facial Soap

*For sale by dealers everywhere*

*For 4c we will send a sample cake. For 10c. samples of Woodbury's Facial Soap, Facial Cream and Powder. For 50c a copy of the Woodbury Book and samples of the Woodbury preparations. The Andrew Jergens Co., 2606 Spring Grove Ave., Cincinnati, O.*



*Read how to reduce conspicuous nose pores*



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When you see the name **Steger & Sons** on a piano, remember that it means something more than mere name association. It means that the man who more than a quarter of a century ago built the first **Steger** piano supervises the manufacture of every **Steger & Sons** piano that leaves the factory. Under such conditions it is not surprising that their popularity has made the **Steger** factories the largest in the world—that these famous instruments sell at remarkably low prices, made possible only by the **Steger** policies of visible, audible result-valuation and small margin of profit.

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"And great was  
the joy of the  
Prince at  
beholding her  
again."



It requires no great im-  
agery to fancy Nabisco a  
dainty from out the realms  
of fairyland.

Yet the exquisite delicacy, the honied  
sweetness, the fragile tenderness of  
Nabisco Sugar Wafers are real—  
enjoyed by all.

Famous  
Sweethearts



A  
Famous  
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Nabisco Sugar Wafers are the  
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blending harmoniously with  
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In ten cent tins; also  
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COMPANY**



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## Club Cocktail

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preserves the sweetness of a clean skin "from bath to bath" by making perspiration odorless.

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### ROSALINE

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### CREAM VAN OLA

For softening and whitening the skin. Feeds and nourishes the tissues, and is considered the standard by the fastidious. Jars, 25 cents.

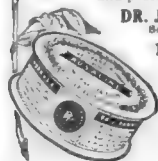
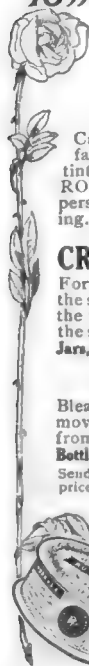
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Bleaches and cleans the nails, removes ink, hosiery and glove stains from the skin; guaranteed harmless. Bottles, 50 cents.

Send stamp for illustrated catalogue of prices. Goods sent on receipt of price and postage.

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most subtly enhances a woman's personality. It is

*The Glory of the Garden*

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**GANESH Muscle-Developing Oil.** \$5, \$2.50, \$1. Removes lines, fills hollows. Anti-Freckle Lotion. \$2.50. Bleaches freckles.

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**GANESH Eastern Balm Cream.** \$3, \$1.50, 75c. Unequaled as a face cleanser and skin food.

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Complete Price-List Booklet, Free. Write for valuable book, "How to Retain and Restore Youthful Beauty of Face and Form." Ganesha Facial Treatments at the Salon, \$2.50. Courses arranged for.

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Since the decision rendered by the United States Supreme Court, it has been decided by the Monks hereafter to bottle

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both being identically the same article, under a combination label representing the old and the new labels, and in the old style of bottle, bearing the Monks' familiar insignia, as shown in this advertisement.

According to the decision of the U. S. Supreme Court, handed down by Mr. Justice Hughes, on May 29, 1911, no one but the Carthusian Monks (Pères Chartreux) is entitled to use the word CHARTREUSE as the name or designation of a Liqueur, so that their victory in the suit against the Cusenier Company, representing M. Henry Lecouturier, the Liquidator appointed by the French Courts, and his successors, the Compagnie Fermière de la Grande Chartreuse, is complete.

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The Gibson Distilling Company, Philadelphia, Pa.

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You had to help soften the beard by rubbing in the lather. Naturally, your rubbing brought the blood to the surface, opened the pores and made the skin very sensitive. That helped the free caustic to get in its work and made the skin doubly sensitive. Under these conditions any razor will feel as though it were pulling the hair out instead of cutting it.

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For sale everywhere 25c  
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*Simple Dresses and Negligees*

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BY THE

**S. S. MOLTKE**

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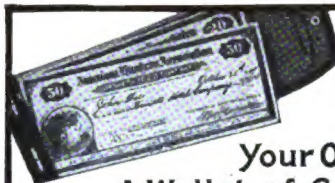
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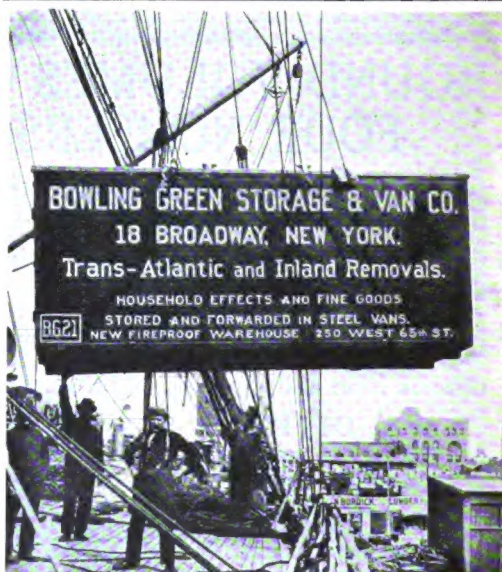
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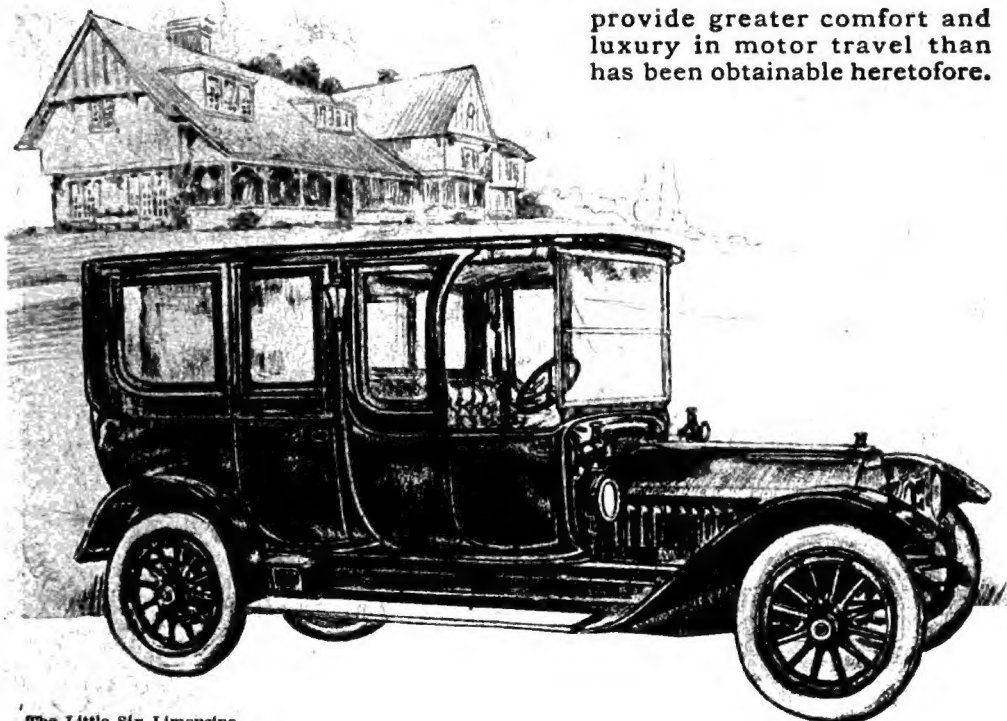
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